
BELIEF AND ISLAM

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Bismi'llahi 'r-rahmani 'r-rahim

BELIEF AND ISLAM

FOREWORD

Allahu ta'ala has mercy upon all people on the earth. He creates useful things and sends them to everybody. He shows the way to Endless Bliss. He guides to the right path whomever He wishes among those who left the true way and followed the way to kufr (infidelity) and heresy as a result of being deceived by their own nafs (human desires), bad friends, harmful books, and the media. He saves them from eternal calamity. He does not bestow this blessing upon those who are cruel and exceed the limits. He lets them stay on the way of kufr, which they like and desire. In the next world, He will forgive whomever He wants of those guilty believers who are to go to Hell, and He will admit them to Paradise. He alone creates every living creature, keeps every being in existence every moment and protects all against fear and horror. Trusting ourselves to the honorable name of Allahu ta'ala, that is, expecting help from Him we begin to write this book.

May glory be to Allahu ta'ala. Peace and blessings be upon His beloved Prophet Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam). May all auspicious prayers be on his Ahl al-Bait and on each of his just and devoted Companions (as-Sahabat al-kiram).

Thousands of precious books have been written on the tenets of the Islamic faith and its commands and prohibitions, and many of them have been translated into foreign languages and distributed to every country. On the other hand, ill-willed and short-sighted people have continuously attacked the useful, bountiful and lightsome rules of Islam and have striven to blemish and change it and to deceive Muslims.

It is still seen with gratitude that in almost every country scholars of Islam are striving to disseminate and defend this path. Unsuitable speeches and articles, however, are still being witnessed, which claimed to be taken from but out of misunderstanding of - the Qur'an al-karim and the hadith ash-Sharif by a few people who have not read or understood the books by the 'ulama' of Ahl as-Sunnat. Yet these speeches and articles are ineffective in front of the firm iman of Muslim brothers and have no influence, but indicate the ignorance of their agents.

A person who claims to be a Muslim and who has been seen performing salat in jamaat must be regarded as Muslim. If, later on, in his speech, writing or behavior something is seen disagreeing with the knowledge of iman as conveyed by the 'ulama' of Ahl as-Sunnat, he will be told that this is disbelief or heresy. He will be told to cease from it and repent. If, with his short mind and coarse reasoning, he answers that he will not, it will be understood that he is a heretic or disbeliever. Even if he continues performing salat, performs hajj and does all kinds of worship and good deeds, he will not escape this disaster unless he gives up the things or acts which causes kufr and unless he repents; he will not be a Muslim. By learning well the things that cause disbelief, each Muslim should protect himself from becoming a disbeliever and should know well the disbelievers and those liars who pretend to be Muslims and keep away from their harm.

Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) said in a hadith ash-Sharif that wrong, false meanings would be extracted from the Qur'an al-karim and hadith, and thus seventy-two heretical groups would appear. This hadith ash-Sharif is explained in the books Bariqa and Al-Hadiqa, which derived it from the Sahihain of al-Bukhari and Muslim. We should not be taken in by the books and lectures of the men of these groups who come forward under such names as

'great scholar of Islam' or 'professor of religion,' and we should be very alert not to fall into the traps of these thieves of faith and belief. Besides those insidious enemies, communists and freemasons, and also Christian missionaries and Jewish Zionists try to deceive the Muslim youth through made-up and deceitful articles, motion pictures, theater, and radio or television broadcasts. They spend millions for this purpose. The 'ulama' of Islam (rahimahumullah) have given necessary responses to all of them and have shown Allahu ta'ala's religion and the way to happiness and salvation.

From among them, we have chosen the book Itiqad-nama by Mawlana Diya' ad-din Khalid al-Baghdadi al-'Osmani (quddisa sirruh), who was a distinguished scholar of Islam. Itiqad-nama was formerly translated into Turkish by the late Haji Faizullah Effendi of Kemah, Erzincan, with the title Fara'id al-fawa'id and was printed in Egypt in 1312 A.H. This translation is simplified under the title Belief and Islam. The translators' own explanations are given in blocked brackets. We thank Allahu ta'ala for vouchsafing the lot of publishing this book for the 14th time in English. The original of this book, Itiqad-nama, is in Persian and exists in the Istanbul University Library (Ibnul Emin Mahmud Kamal Dept. F. 2639).

It is written at the end of the subject about 'disbeliever's marriage' in Durr al-mukhtar, "If a Muslim girl with nikah (marriage contract as prescribed by Islam) does not know Islam when she reaches puberty, her nikah becomes void [she becomes a renegade]. The attributes of Allahu ta'ala must be told to her, and she must repeat them and say, 'I believe these.' " In explaining this, Ibn 'Abidin (rahimah- Allahu ta'ala) said, "As the girl is little, she belongs in her parents' faith; she is Muslim. When she reaches puberty, she does not belong to her parents' faith any longer. When she reaches puberty, because of her unawareness of Islam, she becomes a renegade. Unless she learns and believes the six tenets of Islam and believes that it is necessary to live up to Islam, she will not continue to be Muslim even if she utters the Kalimat at-tawhid, that is, says, 'La ilaha illa'llah Muhammadun Rasul-Allah.' She has to believe the six tenets expressed in 'Amantu bi-'llahi..,' and she has to say, 'I accept the commands and prohibitions of Allahu ta'ala.' "This explanation of Ibn 'Abidin shows that a disbeliever becomes Muslim as soon as he says the Kalimat at-tawhid and believes its meaning. But, like any other Muslim, when he has the chance he has to memorize the following words and learn their meaning precisely: "Amantu bi'llahi wa Mala'ikatihi wa Kutubihi wa Rasuluhi wal-yawm-il-akhiri wa bil-qadari khayrihi wa sharrihi minallahi ta'ala walba'su ba'd-al-mawti haqqun ash-hadu an la ilaha illallah wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa Rasuluhu."

Also, if a Muslim boy does not learn these six tenets and say that he believes them, he becomes a renegade when he reaches puberty. This work, Belief and Islam, contains detailed information on these six tenets. Every Muslim should read this book well and do his best to get his children and all his acquaintances to read it.

In the text, the meaning of ayat-i karimas are given as ma'al, which means 'meaning as reported by the scholars of tafsir'; because, the meaning of ayat-i karimas had been understood only by Rasulullah (sall-Allahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and were revealed to his Sahaba by him. The scholars of tafsir (science of interpretation of the Qur'an al-karim) differentiated these hadiths from those made up by munafiqs, mulhids and zindiqs, and, for those hadith ash-Sharifs they could not find, they themselves gave meanings to those ayats by following tafsirs. What is understood by the ignorant in religion, who speak Arabic but have no knowledge of tafsir, is not called the tafsir (interpretation) of the Qur'an. That is why a hadith ash-Sharif says, 'One who gives meaning to the Qur'an al-karim according to his own understanding becomes a disbeliever.' A glossary of Arabic and other non-English terms foreign to the English reader is appended.

May Allahu ta'ala have us all keep to the right path shown by the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat! May he protect us from believing in the false, deceitful, insidious lies of the enemies of Islam and of the non-madhabite using the name 'great scholar of Islam'!

Miladi (1992) Hijri Shamsi (1370) Hijri Kamari (1412)
WAQF IHLAS

INTRODUCTION

[For a beatific and beautiful beginning, Mawlana Khalid Baghdadi (quddisa sirruh) commences his book by quoting the 17th letter of the third volume of the book Maktubat by al-Imam ar-Rabbani Ahmad al-Faruqi as-Shirhindi (1) (quddisa sirruh)].

I begin my letter with the Basmala. Infinite glory and thanks be to Allahu ta'ala who bestowed upon us all kinds of favors and honored us by making us Muslims and valued us by making us the Umma of Rasulullah Muhammad (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam), which is the highest blessing.

We should meditate and realize that Allahu ta'ala alone blesses every favor upon everybody. He alone creates everything. He alone is the One who keeps every being in existence. Superior and good qualities of men are all His blessings and favors. Our life, reason, knowledge, strength, sense of hearing and speech are all from Him. He always is the One who sends innumerable blessings and favors. He is the One who rescues human beings from trouble and distress, who accepts prayers and keeps away grief and disaster. Only He creates sustenance and causes them to reach us. His blessing is so bountiful that He does not cut off the sustenance of those who commit sins. His covering sins is so great that He does not disgrace or hold up to scorn or tear the honesty veil of those who do not obey His commands or abstain from His prohibitions. He is so forgiving, so merciful that He does not hurry in punishing those who deserve punishment and torture ('adhab). He scatters His blessings and favors upon both those whom He likes and His enemies. He does not spare anything from anybody. And as the highest, the most precious of His benefactions, He points out the right path to happiness and salvation. He encourages us not to go astray, so that we go to Paradise. And He orders us to adapt ourselves to His beloved Prophet (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) in order that we may attain all the infinite blessings, endless and inexhaustible pleasures in Paradise, and His own consent and love. Thus, Allahu ta'ala's blessings are as obvious as the sun. The favors which come from others, in fact, come from Him. He, again, is the One who makes others intermediaries and gives wish, power and strength to do favors. For this reason, He is always the One who sends all the blessings that come through all places and all people. To expect favors from anybody but Him is like asking for something from the custodian or asking for alms from the poor. The ignorant as well as the educated, and blockheads as well as the intelligent and the keen know that what we say here is right and to the point, for, everything said is obvious facts. It is not necessary even to think them over.

He who does favors is to be thanked and respected. Therefore, it is a human duty for every man to thank Allahu ta'ala, who has bestowed these favors. It is a debt, a duty which wisdom commands. But it is not easy to carry out this thanksgiving due to Him, for men, having been originally created out of nothing, are weak, indigent, faulty and defective. As for Allahu ta'ala, He always and eternally exists. He is quite removed from defectiveness. Every kind of superiority belongs to Him only. Men have by no means any similarity or proximity to Allahu

ta'ala. Can men, who are so inferior, thank such a high being as Allahu ta'ala in a manner fit for His Dignity? There are so many things that men consider beautiful and precious, but He knows that they are evil and dislikes them. Things which we consider to be reverence or thanks may be common things not liked at all. For this reason, men, with their own defective minds and short sights, cannot discern the things that express thanks and veneration to Allahu ta'ala. Unless the ways of thanking and respecting Allahu ta'ala are shown by Him, acts that are considered as praising may be slander.

"So, the gratitude to be shown and the human duties to be done for Allahu ta'ala with the heart, tongue and body had been defined by Allahu ta'ala and communicated by His beloved Prophet (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam)! The human duties which Allahu ta'ala showed and ordered are called Islam. One thanks Him by following the way His Prophet revealed. Allahu ta'ala does not accept or like any thanks, any worship incompatible with or outside this way, because there are many things which men consider beautiful but which Islam disapproves of and regards as ugly.

"Hence, in thanking Allahu ta'ala, people who have reason should adapt themselves to Hadrat Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam). His path is called Islam. The person following Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam) is called a Muslim. Thanking Allahu ta'ala, that is, following Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam), is called 'ibadat (worship). Teachings of Islam are of two parts: religious and scientific. The former has two branches:

1) Teachings that must be believed through the heart and are called the teachings of *usul ad-din* or *iman*; 2) Teachings of 'ibadat that are to be done through the body or the heart and are called the teachings of *furu' ad-din*, *ah'kam al-Islamiyya* or the *Sharia*.

[The religious teachings revealed by Islam are the teachings that are written in the books of the scholars of *Ahl as-Sunnat*. One becomes a *kafir* (disbeliever) if he does not believe, among the teachings of *iman* and the *Sharia* that have been reported by the scholars of *Ahl as-Sunnat*, one of the *nasses* (*ayats* or *hadiths*) with explicit meaning. If he keeps his disbelief secret, he is called a *munafiq*. If not only he keeps it secret but also he tries to deceive Muslims by passing himself off as a Muslim, he is called a *zindiq*. If he makes *tawil* of the *nasses* with explicit meaning without knowing, that is, gives wrong meaning to them and believes wrongly, he again becomes a disbeliever and is called a *mulhid*. If he believes wrongly by making *tawil* of the *nasses* with inexplicit meaning, he does not become a disbeliever but, because he has departed from the right path of the *Ahl as-Sunnat*, will go to Hell. Since he believes in the *nasses* with explicit meaning, he will not remain in Hell eternally but will be taken into Paradise. Such people are called *ahl al-bidat* or heretical groups. There are seventy-two heretical groups. None of their 'ibadat is acceptable. Muslims whose faith is correct are called *Ahl as-Sunnat wal-Jamaat* or *Sunnis*. In relation to 'ibadat, the *Sunnis* belong to four different *madhhabs*. Those who follow one of these *madhhabs* acknowledge that the followers of the other three also belong to *Ahl as-Sunnat*, and they love one another. A person who does not follow any of these *madhhabs* does not belong to *Ahl as-Sunnat*. Further, "He who does not belong to *Ahl as-Sunnat* is either a disbeliever or a man of *bidat*." (2)

If a person who carries out his 'ibadat according to one of the four *madhhabs* commits sins, or if he makes any mistake in his 'ibadat, Allahu ta'ala will forgive him and will never put him into Hell, if He wishes. He will torture him as much as his sins, if He wishes, but later he will be released from torture. Those who do not believe even one of the clear facts that must be believed in Islam, that is, that are heard even by *ignoramus*, are called *kafirs* (disbelievers) and will be subject to eternal torture in Hell. There are two types of *kafirs*: The *kafir* with a holy book, and

the kafir without a holy book. If a Muslim abandons his religion, he is called a "murtadd" (renegade, apostate). Ibn 'Abidin (rahimah- Allahu ta'ala) wrote in the subject on 'people not to be married due to polytheism': "Renegades, mulhids, zindiqs, fire-worshippers, those members of one of the seventy-two groups who are as excessive as to become disbelievers, people called [Brahmins, Buddhists,] Batinis, Ibahatis and Durzis (Druzes), idolaters, the ancient Greek philosophers and munafiqs are all disbelievers without holy books." Communists and the freemasons also are disbelievers without holy books. Christians and Jews, who believe in revealed books which were later interpolated, are disbelievers with books.

If a disbeliever, with a holy book or without one, embraces Islam, he will escape going to Hell. He will become a sinless, innocent Muslim. But he has to become a Sunni Muslim, that is, to read and learn the book of one of the 'ulama' of Ahl as-Sunnat and adapt his iman, acts and words to what he thus learns. In the world it is understood from a person's clear words and actions said and done without darura (strong necessity or compulsion) if he is Muslim or not. It becomes definite at a person's last breath if he has gone to the next world with iman. If a Muslim with grave sins repents for them, he or she will surely be forgiven and become a sinless, pure Muslim. It is explained in detail in 'ilm al-hal books, for example, the book Endless Bliss, what repentance is and how it will be done.]

FOOTNOTES

(1) Imam-i Rabbani passed away in 1034 [1624 A.D.].

(2) In the letters of Imam-i Rabbani, especially in the 286 th letter of the first volume and in at-Tahtawi's commentary to Durr al-mukhtar (in section "Zabayih") and Mawlana Hamd-Allah ad-Dajwi's Al-Basa'ir li-munkiri't-tawassuli bi ahl al-maqabir. Both books are in Arabic. The latter was written and printed in India and was reproduced in Istanbul in 1395 (1975).

IMAN AND ISLAM

In this book, Itiqad-nama, the Prophet's (sall- Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) hadith telling of iman and Islam will be explained. I hope that, through the blessing of this hadith ash-Sharif, the faith of Muslims will be perfected, and thus they will attain salvation and happiness. And I hope again that it will cause me, Khalid, whose sins are a lot, to be saved. May Allahu ta'ala, in whom I have the beautiful belief that He needs nothing and that His favors and blessings are so plentiful and who pities His servants much, forgive this poor Khalid, whose stock is so little and heart so black, for his unsuitable words, and accept his defective 'ibadat. May He protect us against the evils of the deceitful, lying Satan [and against being deceived by false, erroneous words and writings of the enemies of Islam] and make us happy! He is the Most Merciful of the merciful and the Most Generous of the generous.

The 'ulama' of Islam said that every discreet male or female Muslim, who has reached the age of puberty, ought to know and believe in the as-Sifat adh-Dhatiyya (3) and as-Sifat ath-Thubutiyya (4) of Allahu ta'ala correctly. It is this which is primarily obligatory (fard) for everybody. Not to know is not an excuse but a sin. Khalid ibn Ahmad al-Baghdadi wrote this book not to make a show of superiority and knowledge to others or to become famous, but to leave a reminder, a service behind. May Allahu ta'ala help humble Khalid (5) with His Power and through His Prophet's blessed soul! Amin.

Everything other than Allahu ta'ala is called the ma'siwa or 'alam (the creation, the universe), which is called "nature" now. All creatures were nonexistent. Allahu ta'ala is the One who has

created them all. They all are mumkin (that may come into existence out of nonexistence) and hadith (that came into being out of nothing); that is, they may come into existence while they are nonexistent, and they came into existence while they had been nonexistent. The hadith ash-Sharif, 'Allahu ta'ala was existent, anything else did not exist,' shows that this is true. ` A second evidence showing that the whole universe and all creatures are hadith is the fact that creatures are transforming and changing into one another all the time; whereas, anything Qadim (without a beginning) should never change. Allahu ta'ala's Dhat (Person, Essence) and Attributes are Qadim and never change.(6) The changes in creatures cannot be coming from the eternal past. They should have a beginning and come into existence from elements or substances, which must have been created out of nonexistence.

Another evidence for the fact that the universe is mumkin, that is, it may come into being out of nonexistence, is that creatures, as we see, are hadith; that is, they come into existence out of nothing.

There are two beings: the mumkin and the Wajib.(7) If only the mumkin existed, or if Wajib al-wujud did not exist, nothing would exist.(8) For this reason, the mumkin could not come into existence or go on being by itself. If some power had not affected it, it would have always remained in nonexistence and could not have come into existence. Since a mumkin could not create itself; it could not, of course, create other mumkins, either. That which has created the mumkin has to be Wajib al-wujud. The existence of the 'alam shows that a creator who created it out of nothing exists. So, the Unique Creator of all that are mumkin, the creatures, is the only Wajib al-wujud without being hadith or mumkin, but always existent and Qadim (eternal). 'Wajib al-wujud' means that its existence is not from something else but from itself, that is, it is always self-existent and is not created by someone else. If this were not so, then it would have to be a creature (mumkin and hadith) created by someone else. And this is contrary to what is deduced above. Persian 'Khuda' (used as a name for Allah) means 'always self-existent, eternal.(9)

We see that the classes of beings are in an astounding order, and science finds out new laws of this order each year. The Creator of this order must be Hayy (Ever-living), Alim (All-knowing), Qadir (Almighty), Murid (All-willing), Sami (All-hearing), Basir (All-seeing), Mutakallim (All-speaking) and Khaliq (All-creating) (10), because, death, ignorance, incapability or being disposed under others' compulsion, deafness, blindness and dumbness are all defects, imperfections. It is impossible that such defective attributes be in Him who has created this 'alam or ka'inat (all beings) in such an order and who protects them against annihilation (11). Moreover, we see the above attributes of perfection also in creatures. He has created them in His creatures. If these attributes did not exist in Him, how could He create them in His creatures, and would not His creatures be superior to Him?

We should also add that in Him who has created all these worlds of beings there should exist all the attributes of perfection and superiority and none of the attributes of deficiency, for, one defective cannot be creative.

Let alone these reasonable evidences, ayat-i karimas and hadith ash-Sharifs explain clearly that Allahu ta'ala has the attributes of perfection. Therefore, it is not permissible to doubt it. Doubt causes disbelief. The above-given eight attributes of perfection are called as-Sifat ath-Thubutiyya. Allahu ta'ala has all the eight attributes of perfection. There is no defect, disorder or change in His Person, Essence, Attributes or Deeds.

FOOTNOTES

(3) As-Sifat adh-Dhatiyya of Allahu ta'ala are six: al-Wujud, existence; al-Qidam, being without beginning, and eternal in the past; al-Baqa', being without end, and eternal in the future; al-Wahdaniyya, having no partner or match; al-Mukhalafatu li 'l-hawadith, being dissimilar to every creature in every respect; al-Qiyamu bi nafsih, self-existence or being unneedy of anything for His existence. No creature has any of these six attributes, nor any relation with them. They belong to Allahu ta'ala exclusively. Some 'ulama' said that al-Mukhalafatu li 'l-hawadith and al-Wahdaniyya were the same and that as-Sifat adh-Dhatiyya are five.

(4) See pages 13 and 24.

(5) Khalid-i Bagdadi passed away in Damascus in 1247 [1826 A.D.].

(6) However, in the universe the state of substances changes in physical events. In chemical reactions, the essence or structure of substances changes. We see objects or substances cease to exist and change into other substances. Today, in atomic changes and nuclear reactions, which have been discovered recently, the matter or element, too, ceases existing and turns into energy.

(7) " 'Wujud' means 'existence, being.' There are three kinds of existence. The first one is Wajib al-wujud, the Necessary Existence. He always exists. He has never been nonexistent before, nor will stop existing in the everlasting future. Only Allahu ta'ala is Wajib al-wujud. The second one is mumtani' al-wujud, that cannot exist. It should never exist. Such is sharik al-Bari' (partner to Allahu ta'ala). Another god partner to Allahu ta'ala or likeness to Him can never exist. The third one is mumkin al-wujud, that may or may not exist. So are the universe, all creatures without any exception. The opposite of wujud is 'adam (non-existence). All creatures were in 'adam, were nonexistent, before they came into existence.

(8) For, it is a change, an event, to come into existence out of nonexistence, and, according to our knowledge in physics, in order for a change to take place in a substance, the substance has to be acted upon by an exterior power, the source of which has to precede the substance.

(9) There is more detailed information in the chapter on page 79.

(10) These are the eight Sifat ath-Thubitiyya of Allahu ta'ala.

(11) Every being, from atom to stars, has been created with some calculations and laws. The regularity in the known laws of physics, chemistry, astronomy and biology bewilders the human mind. Even Darwin had to say that when he thought of the order and delicacy in the structure of the eye, he felt as if he would go crazy. Is it possible that He who has created all the laws, delicate calculations and formulas taught as scientific knowledge be defective?

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

With the aid of and the strength given by Allahu ta'ala, who keeps all 'alams in existence and gives all the favors and gifts and who never sleeps, now we begin to explain the blessed saying of our Prophet (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam).

Our beloved superior Hadrat 'Umar ibn al-Khattab (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh), who was a gallant leader of Muslims, one of the highest of the Prophet's Companions, and was famous for his truthfulness, said:

"It was such a day that a few of us, the Companions, were in the presence and service of Rasulullah (sall- Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam)." That day, that hour was so blessed, so precious a day that he would hardly live it once again. On that day, it fell to his lot to be honored with being in the Prophet's company, near him, and to see his beautiful face, which was food for spirits and pleasure and comfort to souls. To emphasize the value, the honor of that day, he said, "It was such a day..." Could there be another time as honorable and precious as the one at which

it fell to his lot to see Jabrail (Jibril, Archangel Gabriel, 'alaihi 's-salam) in the guise of a human being, to hear his voice and to hear the knowledge men needed as beautifully and clearly as possible through the blessed mouth of Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam)?

"That hour, a man came near us like the rising of the moon. His clothes were extremely white and his hair was very black. Signs of travel, such as dust or perspiration were not seen on him. None of us, the Companions of the Prophet (sall-Allahu 'alaihi wa sallam), recognized him, that is, he was not one of the people we have seen or known before. He sat down in the Presence of Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam). He placed his knees near the Prophet's blessed knees." This person, in the guise of a human figure, was the angel called Jabrail. Though his way of sitting seems to be incompatible with manners (adab), it showed us a very important fact that, in learning religious knowledge, there is no such thing as shyness, nor does pride or arrogance become a master. Hadrat Jabrail wanted to show the Prophet's Companions that everybody should ask what he wanted to know about Islam freely from teachers without feeling shy, for there should not be shyness in learning the religion or embarrassment in paying, teaching or learning one's debt to Allahu ta'ala.

"That noble person put his hands on Rasulullah's (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) blessed knees. He asked Rasulullah, 'O Rasul-Allah! Tell me what Islam is and how to be a Muslim.' "

The literal meaning of 'Islam' is 'to yield and submit.' Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) explained that the word 'islam' was the name of the five basic pillars in Islam, as follows:

1. Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala alaihi wa sallam) said that the first of the five fundamentals of Islam was "to say the kalimat ash-shahada"; that is, one should say, "Ash'hadu an la ilaha illa'llah wa ash'hadu anna Muhammadan 'abduhu wa Rasuluhu." In other words, a discreet person who has reached the age of puberty and who can talk has to say vocally, "On the earth or in the sky, there is no one but Allahu ta'ala worthy of worship. The real being to be worshipped is Allahu ta'ala alone. He is the Wajib al-wujud. Every kind of superiority exists in Him. No defect exists in Him. His name is Allah," and to believe in this absolutely with all his heart. And also one should say and believe: "The exalted person who had a rose-pink skin, a white-reddish, bright and lovely face, black eyes and eye-brows; who had a blessed wide forehead, with a good temper; who shed no shadow on the ground, was soft-spoken and was called Arab because he was born in Mecca of Hashemite-descent, named Muhammad ibn Abdullah, is Allahu ta'ala's human servant (abd) and messenger (Rasul)." The Prophet's mother was Hadrat Amina bint Wahab. He was born in Mecca [at the dawn of Monday, 20th of April, 571]. When he was forty, in the year called the 'Bi'that' year, he was informed that he was the Prophet. After this, he invited people to Islam for thirteen years in Mecca. Then he emigrated to Medina on the command of Allahu ta'ala. There he spread Islam everywhere. Ten years later, he passed away in Medina on Monday 12, Rabi' al-Awwal (July, 632)(12).

2. The second fundamental of Islam is "to perform the ritual prayer (namaz, salat) [five times a day in accordance with its conditions and fards] when the time for prayer comes." It is fard for every Muslim to perform salat five times every day after each time of salat starts and to know that he or she performs it in due time. Performing it before its time by adapting wrong calendars prepared by ignoramuses or non-madhhabite people is a grave sin and such a salat is not sahih. Such calendars also cause one to perform the initial sunnat salat of noon prayer and the fard salat of evening prayer in a makruh time. The ritual prayer has to be performed paying attention to its fards, wajibs and sunnas, submitting the heart to Allahu ta'ala and before the due time is over. In the Qur'an al-karim the ritual prayer is called 'salat'. Salat means man's praying, angel's doing istighfar, and Allahu ta'ala's having compassion and pitying. In Islam, salat means to do certain

actions, to recite certain things as shown in 'ilm al-hal books. Salat is started with the words 'Allahu akbar,' called the 'takbir al-iftitah,' and said after raising the hands up to the ears till putting the hands under the navel (for men). It ends with the salam by turning the head to the right and left shoulders at the end of the last sitting posture.

3. The third fundamental of Islam is "to give the zakat of one's property." The literal meaning of zakat is 'purity, to praise, and become good and beautiful.' In Islam, zakat means 'for a person who has property of zakat more than he needs and at a certain amount called nisab to separate a certain amount of his property and to give it to Muslims named in the Qur'an al-karim without reproaching them.' Zakat is given to seven kinds of persons. There are four types of zakat in all of the four madhhabs: the zakat of gold and silver, the zakat of commercial goods, the zakat of the stock animals [sheep, goats and cattle] that graze in the fields for more than half a year, and the zakat of all kinds of substances of necessity issuing from the earth. This fourth type of zakat, called 'ushr, is given as soon as the crop is harvested. The other three are given one year after they reach the amount of nisab.

4. The fourth fundamental of Islam is "to fast every day of the month of Ramadan." Fasting is called 'sawm.' Sawm means to protect something against something else. In Islam, sawm means to protect oneself against three things [during the days] of the month of Ramadan, as they were commanded by Allahu ta'ala: eating, drinking and sexual intercourse. The month of Ramadan begins upon seeing the new moon in the sky. It may not begin at the time calculated in calendars.

5. The fifth fundamental of Islam is "for the able person to perform the hajj (pilgrimage) once in his life." For an able person who has money enough to go to and come back from the city of Mecca besides the property sufficient for the subsistence of his family he leaves behind until he comes back, it is fard to perform tawaf around the Kaba and to perform waqfa on the plain of 'Arafat, provided that the way will be safe and the body healthy, once in his lifetime.

"The person, upon hearing these answers from Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam), said, 'O Rasul-Allah! You told the truth.' Hadrat 'Umar (radi-Allahu 'anh) said that of the Prophet's Companions, the ones who were there were astonished at the behavior of this person who asked a question and confirmed that the answer was correct. One asks with a view to learn what one does not know, but to say, "You told the truth," indicates that one already knows it.

The highest of the five fundamentals listed above is to say the Kalimat ash-shahada and believe its meaning. The next highest is to perform salat. Next to this is to fast. Then comes the pilgrimage. The last one is to give zakat. It is unanimously certain that kalimat ash- shahada is the highest. About the sequence of the other four, most 'ulama' said the same as we said above. Kalimat ash-shahada became fard first, at the beginning of Islam. Salat five times a day became fard on the Miraj Night in the twelfth year of Bi'that, a year and some months before the Hegira. Fasting during Ramadan became fard in the month of Shaban, the second year of the Hegira. Giving zakat became fard in the month of Ramadan, in the same year when fasting became fard. And pilgrimage became fard in the ninth year of the Hegira.

If a person denies, disbelieves, refuses, makes fun of or if he does not respect one of these five fundamentals of Islam, he becomes a disbeliever, may Allah protect us! Similarly, he who does not accept any of the things which are unanimously and clearly declared as halal (permitted) or haram (forbidden), or he who says halal for haram or haram for halal becomes a disbeliever. If a person denies or dislikes one of the teachings known to be indispensable to Islam, that is, those that are heard and known even by the common people, he becomes a disbeliever. (13) If an ordinary person does not know the teachings that are not so commonly spread or indispensable so as to be known by him, he is not in disbelief (kufr) but sinful (fisq).

FOOTNOTES

(12) According to historians, the Prophet entered the cave at the Sawr Mountain towards evening on Thursday, 27 of Safar, 622 A.C., on his emigration from al-Makkat al-Mukarrama to al-Madinat al-Munawwara. He left the cave on Monday night and entered Quba, a quarter near Medina, on Monday, 8 of Rabi'al-awwal (20 of September, 622). The beginning of the Hijri Shamsi calendar adopted by the Shiites is six months before this. That is, the Nawruz festival of the Majusi disbelievers (fire worshippers) begins on March 20. This happy day became the beginning of Muslims' Hijri Shamsi calendar. On Thursday, day and night were equal, and he left Quba and entered Medina on Friday. The outset of the month of Muharram in the same year (Friday, 16th of June) was accepted as the beginning of Hijri Kamari calendar. The Hijri Shamsi year coinciding with any Western new year's day is 622 years less than that Western new year. And the Western year coinciding with any Hijri Shamsi year's day is 621 more than that Hijri Shamsi new year.

(13) For example, to eat pork, to have alcoholic drinks, to gamble; for a woman or girl to show herself to others with nothing to cover her head, hairs, arms and legs and; for a man to show himself to others without covering the part between the knees and the navel, are all haram. That is, Allahu ta'ala has forbidden these. The four madhhabs, which explain of the commands and prohibitions of Allahu ta'ala, drew separately the boundary of the private body surface, which man is forbidden to look at or to display, differently from one another. It is fard for every Muslim to cover those parts of the body as described by the madhhab he belongs to. Also, it is haram for others to look at those who have not covered these parts of their bodies. It is written in Kimya-yi Saadat that it is haram for women and girls to go out without covering their heads, hair, arms, legs, and it is also haram to go out with thin, ornamented, tight and perfume scented dresses. Their mothers, fathers, husbands and brothers who permit them to go out as such and who think that it is appropriate and who appreciate them will share their sins and torments; that is, they will burn in the Hell altogether. If they repent, they will be forgiven and will not be burned. Allahu-ta'ala likes those who repent. In the third year of the Hegira, girls and women who have reached the age of puberty were ordered not to be seen by namahram men, but to cover themselves.

One should not be deceived by the false assertions of the British spies and of those ignoramuses who have been trapped by them who say that there was no covering before the coming of the ayat of hijab and who say that fiqh scholars have fabricated the order for covering later.

Lying, gossip, backbiting, slander, theft, cheating, treachery, hurting someone's feelings, mischief-making, using someone's property without permission, not paying a laborer or porter's due, rebellion, that is, opposing the laws and the government's orders, and not paying taxes are sins, too. Committing them against disbelievers or in non-Muslim countries is also haram.

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF IMAN

"This exalted person asked again, 'O Rasul-Allah! Now tell me what is iman.'" Having asked what was Islam and the answer having been given, Hadrat Jabrail ('alaihi 's-salam) asked our master Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) to explain the essence and reality of iman. Literally iman means 'to know a person to be perfect and truthful and to have faith in him.' In Islam, 'iman' means to believe the fact that Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) is Allahu ta'ala's Prophet; that he is the Nabi, the Messenger chosen by Him, and to say this with the heart; and to believe in brief what he transmitted briefly and to believe in detail what he transmitted in detail from Allahu ta'ala; and to say the Kalimat ash-shahada whenever possible. Strong iman is such that, as we know for certain that fire burns, serpents kill by poisoning and we avoid them, we should deem Allahu ta'ala and His attributes great, be fully certain of this by heart, strive for his consent (rida') and run to His beauty (jamal), and beware of His wrath (ghadab) and torture (jalal). We should write this iman on the heart firmly like an inscription on marble.

Iman and Islam are the same. In both, one is to believe the meaning of the Kalimat ash-shahada. Though they differ in general and in particular, and have different literal meanings, there is no difference between them in Islam.

Is iman one thing, or is it a combination of parts? If it is a combination, how many parts is it made of? Are deeds or 'ibadat included in iman or not? While saying, "I have iman," is it right to add "insha- Allah" or not? Is there littleness or muchness in iman? Is iman a creature? Is it within one's power to believe, or have the believers believed under compulsion? If there is force or compulsion in believing, why was everybody ordered to believe? It would take a long time to explain all these one by one. Therefore, I will not answer them separately here. But it should be known thus far that, according to the Ashari madhhab and the Mutazila, it is not jaiz (probable) for Allahu ta'ala to command us to do something that is not possible. And according to the Mutazila, it is not jaiz for Allahu ta'ala to order something which is possible but which is not within man's power. According to the Ashari, it is jaiz, yet He has not ordered it. To order people to fly in the air is of this sort. Neither in iman nor in 'ibadat did Allahu ta'ala order His creatures to do what they would not be able to do. For this reason, a person who goes mad or becomes ghafil (forgetful, oblivious), or sleeps or dies while he is Muslim is still Muslim, though he is not in a state of confirmation.

We should not think of the literal meaning of 'iman' in this hadith ash-Sharif, for, there was not one ordinary man in Arabia who did not know its literal meaning: 'considering truthful, belief.' Certainly the Sahabat al-kiram (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anhum ajmain) knew it, too, but Jabrail ('alaihi 's-salam) wanted to teach the meaning of iman to the Sahabat al-kiram by asking what iman meant in Islam. And Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) said that iman was to believe in six certain facts:

BELIEF IN ALLAHU TA'ALA

1. "First of all, to believe in Allahu ta'ala," he declared. Iman is to have a heartfelt belief in six certain facts by finding through kashf (revelation) or wijdan (conscience) or by the comprehension of the 'aql (intellect, reason) through an evidence or by trusting and following a distinguished and approved statement, and to confirm this with the tongue.

The first of these six facts is that Allahu ta'ala is the Wajib al-wujud and the Real Mabud (the One Worshipped) and the Creator of all creatures. It should be believed for certain that He alone creates everything [every substance, atoms, elements, molecules, compounds, organic substances, cells, life, death, every event, every reaction, all kinds of power and sorts of energy, movements, laws, spirits, angels and every being living or lifeless out of nothing, and He makes them all survive] in both this and the next worlds without material, time or similarity out of nonexistence. As He created all creatures in the universe [in one moment while they had been nonexistent], so He [creates some of them from one another, and, when the time for Doomsday comes, in one moment He] will annihilate everything. He is the Creator, Owner, Absolute Ruler of all creatures. It has to be believed and acknowledged that there is nobody to dominate Him, to command Him or to be superior to Him. Every type of superiority, every attribute of perfection, belongs to Him only. No defect, no deficient attribute exists in Him. He is able to do what He wills. What he does is not intended to be useful to Him or to others. He does not do something for a reward. In everything He does, however, there are hidden causes (hikma), uses, blessings and favors.

Allahu ta'ala does not have to do what is good and useful for His creatures, nor does He have to reward some people or torture some others. It would befit His superiority and benevolence if He would bring all the sinners to Paradise. And it would become His justice if He would put all of those who obey and worship Him into Hell. Yet He decreed and declared that He would put Muslims, those who worship Him, into Paradise and grant them favors, and that He would eternally torture disbelievers in Hell. He does not go back on His word. It would be of no use for Him if all the living creatures believed and worshipped Him, nor would it give Him any harm if all creatures became disbelievers, became excessive or disobeyed Him. If man wishes to do something, He creates it if He wills, too. He alone is the One who creates every action of His human creatures and all things. If He does not will or create, nothing can move. If He does not wish, no one can become a disbeliever or can revolt. He creates disbelief and sins, yet He does not like them. No one can interfere with His works. No one has the strength or the right to ask the reason why He has done this or that or to comment on how He must do. He will forgive, if He wills, a person who has committed any great sin and has died without repentance, except if it is polytheism or disbelief. He will torture him, if He wills, for just a little sin. He declared that he would never forgive disbelievers and apostates and that He would torture them eternally.

He will torture in Hell those Muslims who worship Him yet whose faith (itiqad) is not compatible with the faith of the Ahl as-Sunnat and who die without repentance. Yet such Muslim people of heresy (bidat) will not remain in Hell eternally.

It is possible (jaiz) to see Allahu ta'ala with the eyes in this world, but no one ever has. On the Day of Judgement He will be seen by disbelievers and sinful Muslims in His Wrath and Glory, and by pious Muslims in His Kindness and Beauty. Angels and women, too, will see Him. Disbelievers will be deprived of this. There is a sound report conveying that genies also will be deprived of this. According to the majority of the 'ulama', "Muslims whom Allahu ta'ala loves will be honored with seeing His Beauty every morning and every evening; Muslims of low degree will be honored every Friday, and women a few times in a year, like festivals in this world." (14) It should be believed that Allahu ta'ala will be seen. Yet we should not wonder how this will happen; His works cannot be comprehended through intellect ('aql). They are not like worldly affairs. [They cannot be measured with physical or chemical criteria.] Such concepts as direction, being opposite or being toward something have no connection with Allahu ta'ala. He is not material. He is not an object, [nor is He an element, an alloy or a compound]. He is not

countable, He cannot be measured, nor can he be calculated. No change takes place in Him. He is not at a place. He is not with time. He does not have a past or a future, front or back, bottom or top, right or left. Therefore, nothing of Him can human reasoning comprehend, nor does human intellect or knowledge suffice to do this. So, man cannot comprehend how He will be seen. Though such words as hand, foot, direction, place and the like, which are not suitable for Allahu ta'ala, exist in ayats and hadiths, they are not used in the sense that we know and use today. Such ayats and hadiths are called muttashabihat. We have to believe them, but we should not attempt to understand what or how they are. Or they can be explained away (tawil) briefly or in detail; that is, they can be given the meanings suitable for Allahu ta'ala. For example, the word hand may be interpreted as power or energy.

Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam) saw Allahu ta'ala during the Miraj. But this seeing was not with the eyes, like seeing in this world. A person who says that he has seen Allahu ta'ala in this world is a zindiq. The observation of awliya' is unlike seeing in this world or seeing in the next world. In other words, it is not ru'ya (seeing) but Shuhud that occurs on them [that is, they see the examples (mithals) through the eyes of their hearts]. Some awliya' said that they saw. However, they mistook the Shuhud they experienced while in sakr, that is, when they were unconscious, for ru'ya. Or these words of theirs are to be explained away.

Question: "It is said above that it is possible (jaiz) to see Allahu ta'ala with the eyes in this world. Then why should a person who says something happened which is possible be a zindiq? If a person who says so becomes a disbeliever, can it be said to be possible?"

Answer: In its literal meaning 'jaiz' means 'possible to happen or not.' But to the madhhab of al-Ashari [Abu 'l-Hasan 'Ali ibn Ismail, passed away in Baghdad in 330 (941 A.D.)] the possibility of ru'ya means that Allahu ta'ala is capable of creating in man quite a different sense for seeing in this world, different from seeing closely or face to face with Him, and different from seeing through the physical laws He created in this world. For example, He is able, so it is possible, to show a mosquito in Andalusia to a blind man in China, and anything on the moon or on a star to a man on the earth. Such a power is peculiar to Allahu ta'ala only. Furthermore, to say, "I saw in this world," is incompatible with the ayat al-karima and with the consensus of the 'ulama'. Therefore, he who says such a word is a mulhid or a zindiq. Thirdly, the phrase "it is possible to see Allahu ta'ala in this world" does not mean "it is possible to see Him on the earth within the physical laws." Whereas, a person who says he saw Allahu ta'ala means that he saw Him as he sees other things; this is a seeing which is not possible (jaiz). A person who says words that cause disbelief is called a mulhid or a zindiq.⁽¹⁵⁾ [After these answers, Hadrat Mawlana Khalid stated, "Be careful!" Thus he directs attention to the soundness of the second answer.]

The elapse of time, day or night, cannot be related to Allahu ta'ala. There can be no change in Him in any respect, nor can it be said that He was in this manner in the past or He will be like that in the future. He does not penetrate (hulul) into anything. He does not unite with anything. He never has an opposite, reverse, likeness, partner, assistant or guide. He does not have a father, mother, son, daughter or wife. He is always present with everybody, surrounds and overlooks everything. To everyone He is closer than the big artery in one's neck. However, His surrounding us, His presence or togetherness or closeness, is not like what we understand from these words. His closeness cannot be comprehended with the knowledge of 'ulama', with the intellect of scientists or with the kashf or Shuhud of awliya'. Human reason cannot understand their inner meanings. Allahu ta'ala is unique in His Person and in His Attributes. No change or differentiation takes place in any of them.

Allahu ta'ala's Names are tawqifi, that is, it is permissible to use His Names shown by Islam and not permissible to use other words.(16) Allahu ta'ala's Names are infinite. It is well-known that He has one thousand and one names; that is, He revealed one thousand and one names of His to human beings. In the religion of Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam), ninety-nine of them, called "al-Asma' al-husna," were revealed.

The Sifat ath-Thubutiyya of Allahu ta'ala (17) are eight in the Maturidiyya madhhab and seven in the Ashariyya madhhab. These attributes of His are eternal and everlasting like His Person; that is, they exist eternally. They are sacred. They are not like the attributes of creatures. They cannot be comprehended through reasoning or assumption or by comparing them with the things in the world. Allahu ta'ala has endowed upon human beings an example of each of His Attributes. Seeing these examples, the Attributes of Allahu ta'ala can be understood to a small extent.

Since man cannot comprehend Allahu ta'ala it is not permissible to think of or to attempt to comprehend Allahu ta'ala. The eight attributes of Allahu ta'ala are neither the same as nor other than His Person; that is, His Attributes do not make up His Person, nor are they other than He. These eight attributes are: Hayat (Life), Ilm (Omniscience), Sam (Hearing), Basar (Seeing), Qudra (Omnipotence), Kalam (Speech, Word), Irada (Will) and Takwin (Creativeness). In the Ashariyya madhhab, Takwin and Qudra make up the same attribute. Mashiyya and Irada are synonymous.

Each of the eight attributes of Allahu ta'ala is unique and in a uniform state. No change occurs in any of them. But each of them varies in its related quality in creatures. That an attribute of His varies in its relation to creatures and in affecting them does not harm its uniqueness. Similarly, even though Allahu ta'ala has created so many kinds of creatures and is protecting all of them against annihilation, He is still one. No change ever occurs in Him. Every creature needs Him every moment in every respect. He does not need anybody in any respect.

FOOTNOTES

(14) Hadrat Shaikh 'Abd al-Haqq ad-Dahlawi [Passed away in Delhi in 1052 (1642 A.D.)] wrote in his Persian work Takmil al-iman: "A hadith ash-Sharif says, 'You will see your Rabb on the Day of Judgement as you see the [full] moon on the fourteenth [of the month].' As Allahu ta'ala is known incomprehensibly in this world, so He will be seen incomprehensibly in the hereafter. Great scholars such as Abul-Hasan al-Ashari and al-Imam as-Suyuti and al-Imam al-Baihaki said that also angels were going to see Allahu ta'ala in Paradise. Al-Imam al-azam Abu Hanifa and some other scholars said that genies did not earn thawab and would not enter Paradise and that only faithful genies would escape Hell. Women will see Allahu ta'ala a few times in a year like festivals in this world. Perfect (kamil) believers will see Him every morning and evening while other believers will see Him on Fridays. To this humble person myself, this good news covers the faithful women and angels and genies, too; it would be proper that the perfect and 'arif women such as Fatima az-Zahra, Khadijat al-Kubra, Aisha as-Siddiqah and other Pure Wives [of the Prophet] and Hadrat Mariam and Hadrat Asiya be given special treatment. Al-Imam as-Suyuti, too, meant this."

(15) The mulhid or zindiq says that he is Muslim. The mulhid is sincere in his words; he believes that he is Muslim and is on the right path. However, the zindiq is an enemy of Islam. He feigns being Muslim in order to harm Islam from within and to deceive Muslims.

(16) For instance, Allahu ta'ala may be called "Alim" (the 'Omniscient'), but we cannot use 'faqih' which also means 'Alim' (scholar, one trained in Islamic sciences), for Islam does not use 'faqih' for Allahu ta'ala. Likewise, it is not permissible to say 'God' instead of Allah, because 'god' means 'idol'; "Ox is the god of Hindus," is said, for example. It is permissible to say, "Allah

is one; there is no god but He." Words like Dieu (French) and Gott (German) can be used for god or idol, but not for Allah.

(17) See the footnote on page 11 for the Sifat adh-Dhatiyya, which are six.

BELIEF IN ANGELS

2. The second of the six fundamentals of iman is "to believe in His angels." Angels are material but ethereal (latif), more ethereal than the gaseous phase of matter. They are nurani (luminous, spiritual). They are alive. They have reason ('aql). Evil peculiar to human beings do not exist in angels. They can take any shape. As gases turn into liquid and solid and take any shape when getting solid, so angels can form beautiful shapes. Angels are not souls that have parted from the bodies of great men. Christians presume that angels are such spirits. Unlike energy and power, they are not immaterial. Some ancient philosophers supposed so. All of them are called mala'ika. 'Malak' (angel) means 'envoy, messenger' or 'power.' Angels were created before all other living creatures. Therefore, we were ordered to believe in them before believing in the holy books, which come before the belief in prophets; and in the Qur'an al-karim the names of these beliefs are given in this succession.

Belief in angels has to be as follows: angels are the creatures of Allahu ta'ala. They are not His partners, nor are they His daughters as disbelievers and polytheists supposed. Allahu ta'ala loves all angels. They obey His commands and never commit sins or disobey the commands. They are neither male nor female. They do not get married. They do not have children. They have life; that is, they are alive. Though, according to a narration traced back to Hadrat 'Abdullah ibn Masud (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh), some angels had children among which the Satan and genies were counted; the tawil of it has been written in books in detail. When Allahu ta'ala announced that He was going to create human beings, angels asked, "Oh Allah! Are You going to create those creatures who will corrupt the world and shed blood?" Such questions, called dhalla, from angels do not harm their impeccability.

Of all creatures, angels are the most plentiful. No one but Allahu ta'ala knows their number. There is no empty space in the skies where angels do not worship. Every place in the skies is occupied by angels in ruku' (bowing during salat) or in sajda (prostrating). In the skies, on the earth, in grass, on stars, in every living and lifeless creature, in every rain-drop, plant leaf, atom, molecule, in every reaction, motion, in everything, angels have duties. They carry out Allahu ta'ala's commands everywhere. They are intermediaries between Allahu ta'ala and creatures. Some of them are the commanders of other angels. Some of them brought messages to the prophets among human beings. Some angels bring good thoughts, called "ilham" (inspiration), to the human heart. Some others are unaware of all human beings and creatures and have lost consciousness upon feeling Allahu ta'ala's Beauty. Each of these angels stays in a certain place and cannot leave its place. Some angels have two wings and some four or more.(18) Angels belonging in Paradise stay in Paradise. Their superior is Ridwan. Angels of Hell, zabanis, carry out in Hell what they are commanded. The fire of Hell does not harm them, as the sea is not harmful to fish. There are nineteen leading zabanis. Their chief is Malik.

For each human being, there are four angels who record all the good and bad actions. Two of them come at night and the other two come during the day. They are called "kiraman katibin" or angels of "hafaza". It was also said that the angels of hafaza were different from the kiraman katibin. The angel on one's right side is superior to the one on the left and records the good

deeds. The one on the left writes down the evil deeds. There are angels who will torture disbelievers and disobedient Muslims in their graves, and angels who will ask questions in graves. The questioning angels are called "munkar" and "nakir". Those who will question Muslims are also called "mubashshir" and "bashhir". Angels have superiority to one another. The most superior angels are the four archangels. The first of them is Jibrail ('alaihi 's-salam). His duty was to bring wahi to prophets, to inform them of the orders and prohibitions. The second one is Israfil ('alaihi 's-salam), who will sound the last trump called 'Sur'. He will sound the Sur twice. At the first sound every living being but Allahu ta'ala will die. At the second sound all will be resuscitated. The third one is Mikail ('alaihi 's- salam). It is his duty to make up cheapness, expensiveness, scarcity, abundance [economic order, to bring comfort and ease] and to move every object. The fourth one is 'Azrail ('alaihi 's-salam), who takes the souls [jan, Persian for Arabic 'ruh'] of human beings. After these four, there are four superior classes of angels: four angels of hamalat al-'Arsh, who will be eight on the Resurrection; angels in Divine Presence, called muqarrabun; leaders of torturing angels, called karubiyun; and angels of Mercy, named ruhaniyun. All these higher angels are also higher than all human beings except prophets ('alaihimu 's-salawatu wa 't-taslimat). The sulaha' and awliya' among Muslims are higher than common or lower angels. And common angels are superior to common, that is, disobedient, sinful Muslims. Disbelievers, however, are lower than all creatures.

At the first sound of the Sur, all angels except hamalat al-'Arsh and the four archangels will be annihilated. Then hamalat al-'Arsh and then the four archangels will be annihilated. At the second sound all angels will come back to life. Hamalat al-'Arsh and the four angels will rise just before the second sound of the Sur. That is, these angels will be annihilated after all the living creatures, as they had been created before all.

FOOTNOTE

(18) As the wings of each kind of fowl, or those of an aeroplane, are of their own structure and are different from the wings of each other kind, so angels' wings have their own structure. When we hear the name of something which we have not seen or do not know, we presume that it is like the things we know and thus we are mistaken. We believe angels have wings, but we do not know how they are. Pictures of winged women in churches, publications or movies, which are regarded as angels, are all false. Muslims do not make such pictures. We should not regard these unrealistic pictures drawn by non-Muslims as true, and we should not believe our enemies.

BELIEF IN BOOKS

3. The third of the six fundamentals of iman is "to believe the Books revealed by Allahu ta'ala." He sent these Books to some prophets by making the angel read to them. To some He sent books inscribed on tablets, and to some others by making them hear without the angel. All these Books are the Word of Allahu ta'ala (Kalam- Allah). They are eternal in the past and everlasting. They are not creatures. They are not words made up by angels, nor are they words of prophets. The Word of Allahu ta'ala is unlike the language which we write, keep in mind and speak. It is not like being in writing, speech or mind. It does not have letters or sounds. Man cannot understand how Allahu ta'ala and his Attributes are. But men can read that Word, keep it in mind and write it. It becomes hadith, a creature, when it is with us. That is, the Word of Allahu ta'ala has two aspects. When it is with human beings, it is hadith and a creature. When it is thought as the Word of Allahu ta'ala, it is eternal (Qadim).

All the books sent down by Allahu ta'ala are just and right. There is no lie or fault in them. Though He said He would punish and torture, it was said that it was possible (jaiz) that He would forgive; this depends on His Will or on conditions which man could not know, or it is meant that He would forgive the punishment which Muslims deserve. Since the words 'punishment' and 'torture' do not narrate an event, it would not be a lie if He forgives. Or, though it is not jaiz that He would not give the rewards which He promised, it is jaiz that He would forgive the punishments. Reason, laws of human beings and ayats prove us right.

It is necessary to interpret ayats and hadiths in their literal meanings, unless there is a risk or an inconvenience. It is not permissible to give other meanings similar to their literal meanings.(19) The ayats called muttashabihat have unintelligible, occult meanings. Only Allahu ta'ala knows and very few distinguished superiors who have been granted al-'ilm al-ladunni understand their meanings as far as they are allowed. No one else can understand them. For this reason, we should believe that ayats of mutashabihat are of the Word of Allahu ta'ala, and we should not investigate their meanings. The scholars in the Ashari madhhab said that it was permissible to explain away (tawil) such ayats briefly or in detail. 'Tawil' means 'choosing, from among the several meanings of a word, the one which is not common.' For example, about the ayat, "The Hand of Allah is superior to theirs," which is the Word of Allahu ta'ala, we should say, "I believe whatever Allahu ta'ala means by this." It is the best to say, "I cannot understand its meaning. Only Allahu ta'ala knows." Or we must say, "Allahu ta'ala's knowledge is unlike our knowledge. His Will is not like our will. Similarly, Allahu ta'ala's Hand is not like the hands of His human creatures."

In the books which Allahu ta'ala revealed, either the pronunciations or the meanings of some ayats, or both, were changed (naskh) by Him. The Qur'an al-karim replaced all the books and abolished the validity of their rules. There will never be any mistakes, additions, forgotten or missing points in Qur'an al-karim until the end of the world, nor will it be forgotten. All knowledge of the past and the future exist in the Qur'an al-karim. For this reason, it is higher and more valuable than all the Books. The greatest mujiza of Rasulullah (sall- Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) is the Qur'an al-karim. If all human beings and genies would assemble and try to say something similar to the shortest sura of the Qur'an al-karim, they would not be able to do it. In fact, the eloquent, literary poets of Arabia assembled and strove very hard, but they could not say something like three short ayats. They could not stand against the Qur'an al-karim. They were stupefied. Allahu ta'ala makes the enemies of Islam incapable and defeated in front of the Qur'an al-karim. The eloquence of the Qur'an al-karim is above human power. Human beings are incapable of saying as it says. The ayats in the Qur'an al-karim are unlike the poetry, prose or rhymed verse of human beings. Nevertheless, it was said in the letters of the language spoken by the literary, eloquent men of Arabia.

One hundred and four of the heavenly books were revealed to us: it is well-known that ten suhuf (pl. of sahifa, little book) were revealed to Adam ('alaihi 's-salam), fifty suhuf to Shis (Sheet) ('alaihi's- salam), thirty suhuf to Idris ('alaihi 's-salam) and ten suhuf to Ibrahim ('alaihi 's-salam); the Tawrat (Torah) was revealed to Musa (Moses) ('alaihi 's- salam), the Zabur (the original Psalms) to Dawud ('alaihi 's-salam), the Injil (Latin 'Evangelium') to 'Isa (Jesus) ('alaihi 's-salam) and the Qur'an al-karim to Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam).

When a person wants to give an order, to forbid something, to ask something or to give some news, first he thinks about and prepares it in his mind. These meanings in mind are called "kalam nafsi," which cannot be said to be Arabic, Persian or English. Their being expressed in various languages does not cause these meanings to change. Words expressing these meanings are called "kalam Lafzi." Kalam Lafzi can be said in different languages. So, kalam nafsi of a person is a

pure, unchangeable, distinct attribute that exists in its possessor like other attributes such as knowledge, will, discernment, etc., and kalam Lafzi is a group of letters that express kalam nafsi and that come out of the mouth of the person uttering them and that come to the ear. Thus, the Word of Allahu ta'ala is the eternal, everlasting, non-silent and non-creature Word existent with His Person. It is an attribute distinct from the as-Sifat adh-Dhatiyya and from as-Sifat ath-Thubutiyya of Allahu ta'ala, such as Knowledge and Will.

The attribute Kalam (Speech, Word) never changes and is pure. It is not in letters or sounds. It cannot be differentiated or classified as command, prohibition, narration or as Arabic, Persian, Hebrew, Turkish or Syriac. It does not take such forms. It cannot be written. It does not need such apparatuses or media as intelligence, ear or tongue. Nevertheless, it can be understood through them as a being distinct from all beings we know; it can be told in any language wished. Thus, if it is told in Arabic it is called the Qur'an al-karim. If it is told in Hebrew it is the Tawrat. If it is told in Syriac it is the Injil. [The book Sharh al-maqasid (20) writes that if it is told in Greek it is the Injil and if it is told in Syriac it is the Zabur.]

Al-Kalam al-ilahiyya (the Divine Word) tells various subjects; if it narrates the events that happened or that will happen, it is called khabar (narration); if not so, it is called insha.' If it points out the things that should be done, it is called amr (command). If it points out prohibitions, it is nahi (prohibition). But no change or increase occurs in al-Kalam al-ilahiyya. Each book or each page revealed is a sheet of the Word of Allahu ta'ala; that is, they are of al-Kalam an-nafsi of His. When it is in Arabic it is called the Qur'an al-karim. The wahi revealed in poetry and that can be written and said and heard and kept in mind is called al-Kalam al-Lafzi or the Qur'an al-karim. Since al-Kalam al-Lafzi denotes al-Kalam an-nafsi, it is permissible to call it al-Kalam al-ilahiyya or the Divine Attribute. Though this Word is of one sort, it can be divided and broken into parts with respect to persons. As the whole of it is called the Qur'an al-karim, so its parts are called the Qur'an al-karim.

The 'ulama' of the right path unanimously say that al-Kalam an-nafsi is not a creature but it is Qadim (eternal). There is no unanimity on whether al-Kalam al-Lafzi is hadith or Qadim. Some who regarded al-Kalam al-Lafzi as hadith said that it was better not to say that it is hadith for it might be misunderstood and come to mean that al-Kalam an-nafsi is hadith. This is the best comment about it. When the human mind hears something that denotes something else, it simultaneously remembers the denoted thing. When one of the 'ulama' of the right path is heard to have said that the Qur'an al-karim was hadith, we must understand that he referred to sounds and words which we read with our mouth. The 'ulama' of the right path have unanimously said that both al-Kalam an-nafsi and al-Kalam al-Lafzi are the Word of Allahu ta'ala. Though some 'ulama' considered this word metaphoric, they all agreed that it was the Divine Word. That al-Kalam an-nafsi is the Word of Allahu ta'ala means that it is Allahu ta'ala's Attribute of Speech, and that al-Kalam al-Lafzi is the Word of Allahu ta'ala means that it is created by Allahu ta'ala.

Question: "From the preceding writing it is understood that the eternal Word of Allahu ta'ala cannot be heard. The one who says, 'I heard the Word of Allah,' means 'I heard the sounds and words uttered' or 'I understood the eternal al-Kalam an-nafsi through these words.' All prophets, even everybody, can hear it in both of these two manners. What is the reason for distinguishing Musa ('alaihi 's-salam) as Kalim-Allah (one to whom Allahu ta'ala spoke)?"

Answer: Musa ('alaihi 's-salam) heard the Eternal Word without letters or sounds, in a way different from al-'Adat al-ilahiyya (the Divine Custom; the law of causation). He heard it in a manner that cannot be explained, as Allahu ta'ala will be seen in Paradise in an unintelligible and unexplainable manner. Nobody else heard it in this manner. Or, he heard the Word of Allahu

ta'ala in sounds not only through his ears but also through every particle of his body, from every direction. Or, he heard it only from the direction of the tree, yet not in sounds or with the vibration of air or with other means. Because he heard it in one of these three conditions, he was honored with the name 'Kalim-Allah'. Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam) also heard the Divine Word in this manner on the Miraj Night. So was the hearing of Jibrail ('alaihi 's-salam) as he received wahi.

FOOTNOTES

(19) The Qur'an al-karim and the Hadith ash-Sharif are in the Quraish language and dialect. But the words should be given the meanings used in the Hijaz thirteen hundred years ago. It is not correct to translate them by giving them contemporary meanings, which are the results of the changes over centuries.

(20) By Sad ad-din at-Taftazani, who passed away in Samarqand in 792 A.H.. (1389).

BELIEF IN PROPHETS

4. The fourth of the six fundamentals of iman is "to believe in Allahu ta'ala's prophets," who were sent to make people attain the way He likes and to guide them to the right path. Literally 'rusul' (pl. of Rasul) were the 'people sent, messengers.' In Islam, 'Rasul' means 'noble, respectable person whose nature, character, knowledge and intellect are higher than those of all the people of his time, having no bad trait in his character and no disliked manner.' Prophets had the quality 'Isma, that is, they did not commit any grave or small sin before or after they were informed of their nubuwwa (prophethood, prophetship).(21) After they were informed of their nubuwwa and until their nubuwwa was known and spread out, they did not have such defects as blindness, deafness or the like. It has to be believed that every prophet had seven peculiarities: Amana (trustworthiness), Sidq (devotion), Tabligh (communication), Adala (justness), 'Isma (purity), Fatana (super-intelligence) and Amn al-'azl (security against dismissal from nubuwwa). A prophet who brought a new faith is called a "Rasul" (messenger). A prophet who did not bring a new faith but invited people to the previous faith is called a "nabi" (prophet).(22) In the communication (tabligh) of commands and in calling the people to Allahu ta'ala's religion, there is no difference between a Rasul and a nabi. We have to believe that all prophets, without exception, were devoted and truthful. He who does not believe in one of them is regarded as not believing in any.

Nubuwwa cannot be attained by working hard, by suffering hunger or discomfort, or by praying very much. It is possessed only with Allahu ta'ala's favor and selection. Religions were sent through the mediation of prophets in order that people's affairs might be useful in this world and the next, and in order to prevent them from harmful acts and make them attain salvation, guidance, ease and happiness. Though they had many enemies and were mocked and treated harshly, prophets did not fear the enemies and showed no hesitation in communicating to people Allahu ta'ala's commands about the facts to be believed and the things to be done. Allahu ta'ala strengthened His prophets with mujizas to show that they were devoted and truthful. No one could stand against their mujizas. The community of a prophet is called his umma. On the Day of Judgement, prophets will be permitted to intercede for their ummas, especially for the ones who are gravely sinful, and their intercession will be accepted. Allahu ta'ala will permit also the 'ulama', sulaha' and awliya' among their ummas to intercede, and their intercession will be accepted. Prophets ('alaihimu 's-salawatu wa 't-taslimat) are alive in their graves in a life we

cannot know; earth does not cause their blessed bodies to rot. For this reason, it was said in a hadith ash-Sharif, "Prophets perform salat and hajj in their graves."(23)

While the blessed eyes of a prophet slept, the eyes of this heart did not sleep. All prophets ('alaihimu 's-salam) were equal in doing their duties as prophets and in possessing the excellences of nubuwwa. The above-mentioned seven peculiarities existed in all of them. Prophets were never dismissed from nubuwwa. The awliya', however, may be deprived of wilaya. Prophets were human beings but not genies or angels, who could never be prophets for human beings or attain the degree of a prophet. Prophets had superiority to and honors above one another. For example, because his umma and the countries he was sent to were larger and because his knowledge and marifa spread in a vaster area and because his miracles were more plentiful and continual and because there were special blessings and favors for him, the Prophet of the Last Age, Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam), was higher than all other prophets. The prophets called Ulu'l'azm were higher than the others. The Rasuls were higher than the nabis who were not Rasuls.

The number of prophets ('alaihimu 's-salam) is not known. It is well known that they were more than 124,000. Among them, 313 or 315 were Rasuls; the six higher Rasuls among them, called Ulu'l'azm, were: Adam, Nuh (Noah), Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), 'Isa (Jesus) and Muhammad Mustafa ('alaihimu 's- salatu wa 's-salam).

The following thirty-three prophets are well-known: Adam, Idris, Sheet (or Shis), Nuh, hud, Salih, Ibrahim, Lut, Ismail, Ishaq, Yaqub, Yusuf, Ayyub, Shu'aib, Musa, Harun, Khidir, Yusha' ibn noon, Ilyas, Alyasa', Dhu 'l-kifl, Sham'un, Ishmoil, Yunus ibn Mata, Dawud, Sulaiman, Luqman, Zakariyya, Yahya, 'Uzair, 'Isa ibn Mariam, Dhu 'l-qarnain and Muhammad ('alaihimu 's-salatu wa 's-salam).

Only the names of twenty-eight of them are written in the Qur'an al-karim. Sheet, Khidir, Yusha', Sham'un and Ishmoil are not written. Among the twenty-eight, it is not certain whether Dhu 'l-qarnain, Luqman and 'Uzair were prophets or not. Dhu 'l-kifl ('alaihi 's-salam) was also called Harqil, who was also said to be Ilyas, Idris or Zakariyya. Ibrahim ('alaihi 's-salam) was Khalil-Allah, because there was no love for creature but only for Allahu ta'ala in his heart. Musa ('alaihi 's-salam) was Kalim-Allah, because he spoke with Allahu ta'ala. Isa ('alaihi 's-salam) was Kalimat- Allah, for he did not have a father and was born only upon al-Kalimat al-ilahiyya (the Divine Word) 'Be!' Furthermore, he preached Allahu ta'ala's words, which were full of Divine Wisdom, and communicated them to the ears of people. Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam), who was the reason for the creation of all creatures and the highest, the most prominent, the most honorable of mankind, was and is Habib-Allah (Allahu ta'ala's Darling). There were many evidences proving his greatness and superiority and that he was Habib-Allah. For this reason, such words as 'was overcome' or 'was defeated' cannot be said about him. At Resurrection, he will get up from his grave before everybody. He will go to the place of Judgement first. He will go to Paradise before everybody. Though the beautiful traits in his character cannot be concluded by counting, nor would human energy suffice to count them, we will ornament our book by writing down some of them:

One of his miracles was his ascent to the Miraj: while he was in bed in al-Makkat al-Mukarrama, he was awoken and his blessed body was taken to the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem (Quds), thence to the heavens, and after the seventh heaven, to the places which Allahu ta'ala determined. We have to believe in the Miraj in this manner.(24) How the Miraj happened is written in detail in many valuable books, particularly in Shifa'-i Sharif.(25) He went with Jabrail ('alaihi's-salam) from Mecca to Sidrat al-muntaha, a tree in the sixth and seventh heavens. No knowledge, no

ascent could go further than there. In Sidra, Rasulullah ('alaihi 's-salam) saw Jabrail ('alaihi 's-salam) in his own shape with his six hundred wings. Jabrail ('alaihi 's-salam) remained in Sidra. From Mecca to Jerusalem, or to the seventh heaven, Rasulullah ('alaihi 's-salam) was taken on Buraq, which was a white, very fast, sexless and unworldly animal of Paradise and which is smaller than a mule and bigger than an ass. It stepped beyond eyeshot. At the Aqsa Mosque, Rasulullah ('alaihi 's-salam) became the imam for prophets in the night or morning prayer. Prophets' souls were present there in their own human figures. From Jerusalem up to the seventh sky, he was made to ascend in a moment with an unknown ladder named Miraj. On the way, angels lined up on the right and on the left, praised and lauded him. At each heaven, Jabrail ('alaihi 's-salam) announced the good news of Rasulullah's ('alaihi 's-salam) arrival. In each heaven he saw a prophet and greeted him. In Sidra, he saw many astonishing things, the blessings of Paradise and the tortures of Hell. He looked at none of the blessings of Paradise out of the desire for and the pleasure of seeing Allahu ta'ala's Jamal. Beyond Sidra, he went ahead alone, among nurs (lights). He heard the sounds of the angels' pens. He went through seventy thousand curtains. The distance between two curtains was like a way of five hundred years. After this, on a bed named Rafrat, which was brighter than the sun, he went through the Kursi and reached the 'Arsh. He went out of the 'Arsh, out of the worlds of time, space and matter. He reached the stage to hear Allahu ta'ala's Speech. He saw Allahu ta'ala in a manner that cannot be understood or explained, like Allahu ta'ala will be seen in the next world without time and space. He spoke with Allahu ta'ala without letters and sounds. He glorified, praised and lauded Him. He was given innumerable gifts and honors. Fifty times of performance of salat in a day were made fard for him and for his umma, but this was gradually reduced to five times a day with the mediation of Musa ('alaihi 's-salam). Before this, salat had been performed only in the mornings and in the afternoons or at nights. After such a long journey, having attained gifts and blessings and having seen and heard so many bewildering things, he came back to his bed, which had not become cold yet. What we have written above was understood partly from ayats and partly from hadiths. It is not wajib to believe all. Yet, since the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat communicated them, those who deny these facts will be separated from Ahl as-sunnat. And he who does not believe an ayat or a hadith becomes a disbeliever.

Let us cite some of the innumerable evidences showing that Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam) is the Most Superior (Sayyid al-Anbiya') of prophets ('alaihimu 's- salawatu wa 't-taslimat).

On the Day of Judgement all prophets will shelter in the shade of his banner. Allahu ta'ala commanded all prophets ('alaihimu 's-salam) that, if they would remain alive till the time of Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam), who, among creatures, was His Darling Elect, they should believe him and be his assistant. Also, all prophets ordered their ummas the same in their last requests.

Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam) was the Khatam al- anbiya' (the Last Prophet), that is, no prophet will succeed him. His blessed soul was created before all prophets.' The status of nubuwwa was given first to him. Nubuwwa was completed with his honoring the world. Towards the end of the world, during the time of Hadrat al-Mahdi, 'Isa (alaihi 's-salam) will descend from the sky to Damascus and belong to Muhammad's ('alaihi 's-salam) umma and preach Islam on the earth.(26) Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam) is the highest of prophets and is Allahu ta'ala's compassion for all creatures. 18,000 'alams (worlds of beings) received benefit from his ocean of blessings. By the consensus [of the 'ulama'], he is the Prophet for all human beings and genies. Many [scholars] said he was the Prophet for angels, plants, animals and for every substance. While other prophets had been sent to certain tribes in certain countries, Rasulullah ('alaihi 's-salam) was and is the Prophet of all worlds and all the living and lifeless creatures. Allahu ta'ala had addressed other

prophets by their names. As for Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam), He favored him by addressing him, "Oh My Prophet (Rasul)!" The like of every miracle that had been granted to every prophet was presented to him.

Allahu ta'ala bestowed upon His Beloved Prophet more gifts and granted him more miracles than He had done to any other prophet of His. He was made superior to all prophets with countless honors and excellences: the moon split into two when he made a sign with his blessed finger; the stones in his palm uttered the Name of Allah; trees greeted him by saying, "O Rasulallah"; the dry log named Hannana cried because Rasulallah ('alaihi 's- salam) departed from its side and left it alone; pure water flowed down through his blessed fingers; the high grades of al-Maqam al-Mahmud, ash-Shafaat al-kubra, al-Hawd al-Kawthar, al-Wasila and al-Fadila were said to be given to him in the next world; he had the honor of seeing Allahu ta'ala's Jamal before entering Paradise; he had the greatest moral quality in the world, the most perfect faith, knowledge, gentleness, patience, gratitude, zuhd (devotion, asceticism), chastity, justness, heroism, bashfulness, bravery, modesty, wisdom, beautiful manners, helpfulness, mercy and inexhaustible honors and honorable traits. No one but Allahu ta'ala knows the number of miracles given to him. His religion abrogated all other religions. His religion was the best and highest of all the religions. His umma is higher than all other ummas. The awliya' of his umma are more honorable than the awliya' of other ummas.

Among the awliya' of the umma of Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam), the one who deserved to be his Khalifa (caliph) was Abu Bakr as-Siddiq (radi- Allahu ta'ala 'anh), who was loved most by the awliya' and imams and was more suited for the caliphate than others. After prophets, he is the highest and the most auspicious of all human beings that have come and that will come. He was the first to attain the status and honor of caliphate. With the favors and blessings of Allahu ta'ala, he had not worshipped idols before Islam commenced. He had been protected against the defects of disbelief and heresy.(27)

After him, the highest of human beings is the second Khalifa 'Umar ibn al-Khattab (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh), whom Allahu ta'ala chose as a friend to His Beloved Prophet.

After him the highest of human beings is the third Khalifa of Rasulallah ('alaihi's-salam), Dhu'n-Nurain 'Uthman ibn 'Affan (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh), the treasure of favors and blessings and the source of modesty, faith and spiritual knowledge.

After him, the most auspicious of human beings is the fourth Khalifa of Rasulallah ('alaihi's -salam), 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh), the possessor of astonishing superiorities and the Lion of Allahu ta'ala.

Hadrat Hasan ibn 'Ali (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anhum)(28) became the Khalifa after him. The thirty years of caliphate mentioned in the hadith ash-Sharif was completed with him. After him, the highest human being is Hadrat Husain ibn 'Ali(radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anhum), the light of Rasulallah's ('alaihi's-salam) eyes.

These superiorities were based on their having earned more thawab; abandoned their country and their beloved ones for the sake of Islam; being Muslims before others; adapted themselves to Rasulallah ('alaihi's-salam) to the highest extent; given themselves up to his sunnat; struggled in spreading his religion; and prevented disbelief, fitna and corruption.

Hadrat Ali (radi-Allahu 'anh) embraced Islam before everybody with the exception of Hadrat Abu Bakr (radi- Allahu 'anh). Yet he was a child and had no property and lived in Rasulallah's ('alaihi 's-salam) house and served him. Therefore, his embracing Islam did not cause disbelievers to become Muslim, to take warning or to be defeated. Whereas, the embracement of the other three Khalifas strengthened Islam. Because Hadrat 'Ali and his sons (radiAllahu ta'ala

'anhum) were the closest relatives of Rasulullah ('alaihi 's-salam) and of Rasulullah's blessed blood, they might be said to have been higher than Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat 'Umar, but their superiority was not a superiority in every respect and did not help them surpass these great persons in every way. It was similar to Khidir's ('alaihi 's-salam) having taught something to Musa ('alaihi 's-salam)(29). Hadrat Fatima was higher than Hadrat Khadija and Hadrat Aisha (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anhunna) because she was closer to the Prophet in respect of blood. But one type of superiority should not show a superiority in every respect. The 'ulama' remarked differently on which of these was the highest. As it is understood from the hadith ash-Sharif, these three, Hadrat Mariam and the Pharaoh's wife, Hadrat Asiya, were the five highest of all the worldly women. The hadith ash-Sharif, "Fatima is superior to the women of Paradise, and Hasan and Husain are the highest youths of Paradise," referred to a superiority only in one respect.

The next highest ones of the Sahabat al-kiram (Companions of the Prophet) were al-'Asharat al-Mubashshara, the ten people blessed with the good news of [going to] Paradise. After them, the highest Muslims were the 313 Muslims who took part in the Holy Battle of Badr. The next were the 700 brave Muslims who took part in the Holy Battle of Uhud. Next to them were the Bi'at ar-Ridwan, the 1400 Muslims who took the oath of allegiance to Rasulullah under the tree.

As-Sahabat al-kiram (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anhum ajmain) sacrificed their lives and property for the sake of Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) and assisted him. It is incumbent (wajib) upon us to mention the name of any of them with veneration and love. It is never permissible to say words unbecoming their greatness. It is a heresy to mention their names disrespectfully.

One who loves Rasulullah ('alaihi 's-salam) has to love all of his Companions. A hadith ash-Sharif says, "He who loves my companions loves them because he loves me. He who does not love them does not love me. He who hurts them hurts me. And he who hurts me hurts Allahu ta'ala. A person who hurts Allahu ta'ala will certainly suffer torture." In another hadith ash-Sharif he declared, "When Allahu ta'ala wants to favor one of my umma, He places in his heart the love of my Companions, and he loves them dearly."

For this reason, it should not be supposed that as-Sahabat al-kiram fought each other for becoming the Khalifa or satisfying their evil thoughts or their sensual desires. It is hypocrisy which leads one to ruination to speak ill of them out of such a supposition, since jealousy and desire for position and addiction to the world had been completely cleared away from their hearts by sitting in the presence of Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) and hearing his blessed words. They were corrected and became free from greed, ambition, grudge and evil nature; they were wholly purified. Considering the fact that a person who stays for a few days in the presence of one of the walis of the umma of the Exalted Prophet benefits from the wali's beautiful morals and excellences and gets clean of worldly ambitions, how could it ever be presumed that the Prophet's Companions, our masters, who loved Rasulullah more than anybody else and sacrificed their possessions and lives for him and abandoned their country for him and were fond of his company, which was nourishment for spirits, were not free from bad morals, that their nafses were not clean and that they fought for the carrion of this temporary world? Those great people were certainly cleaner than everybody. It is unbecoming to liken the disagreements and combats between them to those between us, an ill-willed people, or to say that they fought to satisfy their evil, sensual and worldly desires. It is not permissible to bear such improper thoughts against as-Sahabat al-kiram. A person who would say something against them should know that to be hostile towards as-Sahabat al-kiram is to be hostile towards Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam), and to speak ill of them means to speak ill of him, who educated and trained them. For this reason, the great men of Islam say that he who does not

respect and have a high opinion of as-Sahabat al-kiram is in disbelief in Rasulullah. The battles of "Jamal" (Camel) and Siffin cannot be taken as grounds for slandering them. Because of some religious reasons, none of those who stood against Hadrat 'Ali in these battles was evil; in fact, they all deserved to be rewarded on the Day of Judgement. A hadith ash-Sharif says, "One reward will be given to the mujtahid who is mistaken, and two or ten to him who finds out what is right. One of the two rewards is for employing ijtihaad. The other is for finding the truth." The disputes and combats among those great people of Islam were not out of obstinacy or hostility but because of their [different] ijtihaads and out of their wish to carry out what Islam ordered. Each of as-Sahabat al-kiram was a mujtahid.(30)

It was fard for every mujtahid to act in accordance with the conclusion he had found by his own ijtihaad, even if his ijtihaad might not be in agreement with that of a mujtahid much higher than he. It was not permissible for him to follow another's ijtihaad. Abu Yusuf and Muhammad ash-Shaibani, the disciples of al-Imam al-azam Abu Hanifa Numan ibn Thabit [d. Baghdad, 150 A.H. (767)], and Abu Sawr and Ismail al-Muzani, the disciples of Imam Muhammad ibn Idris ash-Shafi'i, [d. Egypt, 204 A.H. (820)], disagreed with their masters on many aspects, and about some of the things which their masters said 'haram' (forbidden) they said 'halal' (permitted), and about some of the things which their masters said 'halal' they said 'haram.' They cannot be said to be sinful or evil on that account. No one has said so, for they were mujtahids like their masters. It is true that Hadrat 'Ali (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh) was more exalted and learned than Hadrat Muawiya and Hadrat 'Amr ibn al-'As (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anhuma). He had many superior qualities to distinguish him from them, and his ijtihaad was stronger and sharper than their ijtihaads. However, since all as-Sahabat al-kiram were mujtahids, it was not permissible for those two to follow the ijtihaad of that great religious leader. It was necessary for them to act upon their own ijtihaads.

Question: "In the battles of 'Jamal' and Siffin, a great many of the Muhajirun and Ansar among as-Sahabat al-kiram took part with, obeyed and followed Hadrat 'Ali. Though all of them were mujtahids, they considered it was wajib to follow him. This shows that it was wajib also for mujtahids to follow Hadrat 'Ali. They had to follow him even if their ijtihaads did not agree with his, did they not?"

Answer: Those who followed Hadrat 'Ali and fought on his side joined him not with the view of following his ijtihaad but because their ijtihaads were in agreement with his ijtihaad and showed that it was wajib to follow Imam 'Ali. Similarly, the ijtihaads of many prominent Companions of the Prophet did not agree with that of Hadrat 'Ali, and it became wajib for them to fight against him. The ijtihaads of as-Sahabat al-kiram happened in three different ways then: some of them understood that Hadrat 'Ali was right, and it became necessary for them to follow Hadrat 'Ali; another side saw that the ijtihaad of those who fought Hadrat 'Ali was right, and it became wajib for them to follow those who fought Hadrat 'Ali and to fight against him; the third group said it would be necessary not to follow either side and not to fight, and their ijtihaad required them not to enter into the war. All these three sides were certainly right and deserved to be rewarded in the next word.

Question: "The [above] answer shows that those who fought against Hadrat 'Ali (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh) were also right. Whereas, the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat have said that Hadrat 'Ali was right, that his opponents were wrong, that they were forgivable because they had an excuse, and that they even gained thawab. What can be said about that?"

Answer: Al-Imam ash-Shafi'i and 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, two great men of Islam, said that it was not permissible to use the word 'wrong' about any of as-Sahabat al-kiram. For this reason, it was said, "It is wrong to say 'wrong' about the superiors." It is not permissible for inferiors to say such words as, "He did right," "He did wrong," "We approve," or "We disapprove," about the superiors. As Allahu ta'ala did not dirty our hands with the blood of these great people, so we should protect our tongues against uttering such words as 'just' and 'unjust.' Those profound scholars who studied the evidences and events and said that Imam 'Ali was right and his opponents were mistaken, in fact, meant that if Hadrat 'Ali had the opportunity to talk with those on the other side, he would have led them to employ ijtiḥad in conformity with his ijtiḥad. As a matter of fact, Hadrat Zubair ibn Awwam was against Hadrat 'Ali in the Battle of "Jamal" but, after studying the facts more deeply, he changed his ijtiḥad and gave up fighting. The words of the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat who consider the mistake as permissible should be taken as such. And it is not permissible to say that Hadrat 'Ali and those who were with him were on the just way and the other Companions of the Prophet, who were on the other side with our mother Aisha as-Siddiqah, were on the corrupt way.

These combats among as-Sahabat al-kiram were out of the differences of ijtiḥad in the branches of the Ahkam ash-Shariyya (the rules of Islam). They did not have any disagreements on the fundamentals of Islam. Today, some people speak ill and disrespectfully of the great men of Islam such as Hadrat Muawiya and 'Amr ibn al-As (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anhuma). They cannot realize that they in reality defame and belittle Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) by defaming as-Sahabat al-kiram. It is written in Shifa' ash-Sharif that Imam Malik ibn Anas said, "A person who swears at and slanders Muawiya(31) and 'Amr ibn al-As(32) deserves the words he says against them. It is necessary to punish severely those who talk and write against and do not show respect for them." May Allahu ta'ala fill our hearts with the love for His Beloved's companions! Not hypocrites or sinful people but pious and Allah-fearing Muslims love those superiors.

Those who realize the value and greatness of Rasulullah's (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) Companions and who love and respect all of them and follow them are called Ahl as-Sunnat. Those who claim to love some of them and don't love others thus slander most of them, and those who do not follow any of them, are called Shiites. There are many Shiites in Iran, India and Iraq. There are none in Turkey. Some of them, in order to deceive the pure Muslim 'Alawis in Turkey, call themselves 'Alawi, which means 'Muslim who loves Hadrat 'Ali'. Loving someone necessitates following in his footsteps and loving those whom he loves; if they loved Hadrat 'Ali (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh) they would follow in his footsteps. He loved all of the Prophet's companions. He was a counsellor to the Khalifa Hadrat 'Umar, who confided his woes to him. He married his and Hadrat Fatima's daughter Umm Ghulsum to Hadrat 'Umar. In a khutba, he said about Hadrat Muawiya, "Our brethren disagreed with us. Yet they are not disbelievers or sinners. Their ijtiḥad occurred in that manner." When Hadrat Talha (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh), who was fighting against him, died a martyr, he himself cleaned the dust from his face and became the imam in the salat performed for his death. Allahu ta'ala declared, "believers are brothers." In the last ayat karima of the Surat al-Fat'h He reports, "The Prophet's Companions loved one another." Not to love even one of the Prophet's Companions, or the worst of it, to bear hostility towards him, is to disbelieve the Qur'an al-karim. The scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat understood the superiority of as-Sahabat al-kiram (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anhum ajmain) correctly and ordered Muslims to love all of them and thus rescued Muslims from the danger.

Those who disliked and bore hostility towards our superiors Hadrat Ali (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh) and his sons and descendants, the apples of the eyes of Ahl as-Sunnat, were called Kharijis (Khawarij). Now they are called Yazidis. Their faith is so corrupt that they hardly have any relation with Islam.

The Wahhabis, while claiming to love all as-Sahabat al-kiram, follow not their path but their own heretical path which they ascribe to as-Sahaba. They do not like the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat, great sufis and Alawis and slander all of them. They suppose that they alone are Muslims. They regard those who are not like them as "polytheists" and consent to taking their lives and property. Therefore, they become Ibahatis. They draw wrong, heretical meanings from the Qur'an al-karim and the Hadith ash-Sharif and think that Islam consists merely of those meanings. They deny the adilat ash-Shariyya and most hadiths. The notables of the four madhhabs have written many books proving with documents that those who depart from Ahl as-Sunnat have gone astray and do much harm to Islam(33).

Ayyub Sabri Pasha (rahimah-Allahu ta'ala) said, "Wahhabism came out with a bloody, torturous rebellion on the Arabian Peninsula in 1205 (1791)." Muhammad 'Abduh of Egypt was one of the people who tried to spread anti-madhabism through his books around the world. In the time of the Union and Progress Party, 'Abduh's books were translated into Turkish and were presented to the youth as the "work of the great scholar of Islam, the enlightened man of ideas, the eminent reformer 'Abduh." Whereas, 'Abduh had openly written that he admired Jamal ad-din al-Afghani [d. 1314 A.H. (1897)], who was a freemason and chief of the Cairo Masonic Lodge. The enemies of Islam, who were in ambush to abolish Ahl as-Sunnat and to annihilate Islam by words falsely praising Islam, insidiously incited this fitna by disguising themselves as religious men. 'Abduh was lauded to the skies. Great scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat, the aimmat al-madhahib, were announced to have been ignorant people. Their names were no longer mentioned. But the pure and noble descendants of our ancestors, who had sacrificed their lives for the sake of Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) and Islam, the sons of honorable martyrs, would not succumb to propaganda and advertisements, for which millions of pounds had been spent. They would not even listen to or acknowledge these false "heroes of Islam." Allahu ta'ala protected the children of martyrs against these heinous attacks. Today, translated books of the anti-madhhabites like Mawdudi (34), Sayyid Qutb(35) and Hamidullah are presented to the youth. They contain heretical ideas unconforming with what the scholars of ahl as-Sunnat said and are extolled extravagantly through gigantic advertisements. We must be always alert and careful. May Allahu ta'ala wake up Muslims from unawareness for the sake of His Beloved Prophet Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam)! May He protect us against being taken in by the lies and slanders of the enemies! Amin. Let us not deceive ourselves by praying only! To pray without clinging to al-Adat al-ilahiyya (Divine Law) of Allahu ta'ala, without working or holding on to the means, would be to ask miracles of Allahu ta'ala. A Muslim should both work and pray. We should first hold on to the means and then pray. The first means for escaping disbelief is to learn and teach Islam. As a matter of fact, it is obligatory (fard) and the primary duty for everybody, man or woman, to learn the faith of Ahl as-Sunnat, the commands and prohibitions.

Those who do not learn the faith and teachings ('ilm al-hal) of Ahl as-Sunnat or teach them to their children are exposed to the danger of deviating from Islam and falling into the abyss of disbelief. The prayers of such people are not acceptable. Then, how can they protect themselves against disbelief? Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) said, "There is Islam where there is knowledge. There is no Islam where there is no knowledge." As it is necessary to eat and drink in order not to die of hunger, so it is necessary to learn our religion in order not to be

deceived by disbelievers and not to become non-Muslims. Our ancestors frequently assembled and read 'ilm al-hal books and thus remained Muslim and enjoyed Islam. They communicated this light of bliss correctly to us. So, for remaining Muslim and not letting our children be captured by the enemies inside or outside, the first and the most necessary preventive measure is to read and digest the 'ilm al-hal books prepared by the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat. Parents who want their child to be a Muslim should send it to a teacher and make certain that it shall learn how to read the Qur'an al-karim. Let us read, learn and teach our children and those we are responsible for while we have the chance. It will be difficult or even impossible for them when they go to school. It will be useless to lament after the degeneration takes place. We should not believe the enemies of Islam, their deceptive and false books, newspapers, magazines, television and radio programs, and motion pictures. Ibn Abidin (rahimah- Allahu ta'ala) wrote in the third volume [of Radd al-mukhtar] that those insidious disbelievers who, though they do not believe in any religion, pretend to be Muslims and teach things that cause disbelief as if they were Islamic, and who strive to cause Muslims to go out of Islam, are called "zindiqs."

Question: "A person who has read translations of their corrupt books says:

'We should read interpretations (tafsir) of the Qur'an al-karim. To entrust the job of comprehending our religion and the Qur'an al-karim to religious scholars is a dangerous and horrible thought. The Qur'an al-karim says not "Oh Religious Scholars" but "Oh Muslims" and "Oh Mankind." For this reason, every Muslim should understand the Qur'an al-karim himself and should not expect this job from anybody else.'

"He wants everybody to read tafsir and hadith books. He does not recommend reading the books of kalam, fiqh and 'ilm al-hal written by Islamic scholars and great men of Ahl as-Sunnat. The publication of Rashid Rida's (36) book *Islamda Birlik ve Fikh Mezhebleri* by the Chief Office of Religious Affairs (publication no. 157; 1394/1974) has all the more confused readers. On its many pages, particularly in the "Sixth Dialogue," the book states:

'They [muqallids, followers of one of the four madhhabs] extolled the mujtahid imams to the degree of prophethood. They even preferred a mujtahid's word which disagreed with the Prophet's hadith to the hadith. They said that the hadith could have been annulled (naskh) or there could have been another hadith in their imam's view. By acting upon the words of those people who might have been wrong in their judging and who might have not known the matter, and by relinquishing the hadith of the Prophet, who was free from error, these muqallids also contradict mujtahids. They even contradict the Qur'an by doing so. They say that no one but a mujtahid imam could understand the Qur'an. Such words of faqihs and other muqallids show that they have adopted them from Jews and Christians. On the contrary, it is easier to understand the Qur'an and the Hadith than understanding the books written by the men of fiqh. Those who have digested Arabic words and grammar will not have difficulty in understanding the Qur'an and the Hadith. Who on earth could deny the fact that Allah is capable of explaining His own religion explicitly? Who could object to the fact that Rasulullah was more able than anybody else to understand what Allah meant and could explain it better than others? To say that the Prophet's explanations were insufficient for Muslims is to claim that he was not able to carry out his duty of communication (tabligh) precisely. If the majority of people had not been able to understand the Qur'an and the Sunnat, Allah would not have charged all people with the rules in the Book and the Sunnat. One should know what one believes together with its documentary evidences. Allah disapproves of taqlid (adapting oneself to a madhhab) and says that their [muqallids'] imitating their fathers and grandfathers would not be deemed excusable. Ayats show that taqlid is never approved by Allah. It is easier to understand that part of the religion concerning the furu'

from its dalil (document, source) than it is to understand the part pertaining to faith (usul, iman). While charging with the difficult one, would not He charge with the easy one? It will be difficult to draw rules from some rare matters, yet then it will be deemed as an excuse not to know or do them. The men of fiqh invented a number of masala (problems, matters) by themselves. They produced rules for them. They attempted to introduce such things as ra'y, qiyas jali and qiyas khafi as documents for them. These were made to overflow into the field of 'ibadat, on which it is impossible to acquire knowledge through reasoning. Thus they expanded the religion several times. They drove Muslims into trouble. I do not deny qiyas; I say that there is no qiyas in the field of 'ibadat. Iman and 'ibadat were completed in the time of the Prophet. No one can add anything to them. The mujtahid imams prohibited people from imitating (taqlid) and made taqlid a prohibition.'

"This passage, which is taken from the book published by the Chief Office of Religious Affairs, like all anti- maddhabite books, prohibits following the imams of the four madhhabs. It commands that everybody should learn tafsir and hadith. What would you say about it?"

Answer: If the passages written by the non-madhabite are read with attention, one will easily see that they try to deceive Muslims by embellishing their heretical thoughts and separatist views with an unsound series of reasoning and false statements. The ignorant, thinking that the writing is based upon knowledge within the framework of logic and reason, may fall for it, yet the learned, keen-sighted people will never be caught in their traps.

In order to warn the youth against the danger of non-madhabism or anti-Sunnism, which has been driving Muslims towards eternal perdition, the 'ulama' of Islam (rahimahum-Allahu ta'ala) have written thousands of valuable books for fourteen centuries. The following is the translation of some passages from the book Hujjat- Allahi 'ala 'l-'alamin by Yusuf an-Nabhani [d. Beirut, 1350 A.H. (1932)] as an answer to the question above:

"Not everybody can draw ahkam (rules, conclusions) from the Qur'an al-karim. Since even the mujtahid imams would not be able to draw from all the rules in the Qur'an al-karim, Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) explained the rules in the Qur'an al-karim in his hadiths. As the Qur'an al-karim was explained by him only, so the hadiths could be understood and explained by as-Sahabat al-kiram and the mujtahid imams only. In order that they could understand them, Allahu ta'ala endowed upon His mujtahid imams scientific and religious knowledge, strong comprehension, keen sight, superfluous mind, and many more virtues. Ahead of all these virtues was taqwa. Next came the Divine Light in their hearts. With the help of these virtues, our mujtahid imams understood what Allahu ta'ala and Rasulullah meant in their words, and, as for those they could not understand, they showed [solutions for] them through qiyas. Each of the four aimmat al-madhahib informed that he did not speak out of his own opinion and said to his disciples, 'If you find a sahih hadith, leave my word aside and follow Rasulullah's hadith!' Whom our aimmat al-madhahib told this were profound scholars who were mujtahids like them. These scholars were the mujtahids of tarjih (ability to distinguish between) who knew the documentation of the four madhhabs. They studied the documents and the transmitters of the hadith on which the madhhab imam had based his ijtihaad and those of the newly encountered sahih hadith, and examined which was said later and many other conditions, and thus understood which was to be preferred (tarjih). Or, the mujtahid imam [the imam al-madhhab] decided about a problem (masala) through qiyas because he did not know the hadith which would document [or solve] it, and his disciples, finding that hadith, decided differently. But, while employing such an ijtihaad, the disciples did not go beyond the rules of the imam. Those mujtahid Muftis who succeeded them gave fatwa in this manner, too. As it is understood from all that has been written

here, those Muslims who have been following the four *aimmat al-madhhahib*, and the *mujtahids* who were educated in their *madhhabs*, have been following the rules of *Allahu ta'ala* and His Messenger. These *mujtahids* understood the rules in the *Qur'an al-karim* and the *Hadith ash-Sharif*, which nobody else could understand, and conveyed what they understood. Muslims have been living up to what *mujtahids* understood and communicated from the *Nass*, that is, the Book and the *Sunnat*. Because *Allahu ta'ala* declares in the 43rd *ayat karima* of *surat al-Nahl*, "If you do not know, ask those who know." (37)

"Only upon the *Umma* of His Beloved Prophet (*sall- Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam*) did *Allahu ta'ala* bestow the fortune that the *aimmat al-madhhahib* would perform *ijtihad* and establish their *madhhabs*, and that all Muslims would come together in these *madhhabs*. *Allahu ta'ala*, on the one hand, created the *imams* of *itiqad* (38) and prevented heretics, *zindiqs*, *mulhids* and Satan-like men from defiling the knowledge of *itiqad*, and, on the other, protected His religion from being defiled by creating the *imams* of *madhhabs*. Since this blessing did not exist in Christianity and Judaism, their religions were defiled and were turned into playthings."

"By consensus of the scholars of Islam, there came no deep scholar capable of employing *ijtihad* after the four hundred years following *Rasulullah's* (*sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam*) death. A person who says that it is necessary to employ *ijtihad* now must be mad or ignorant of the religion. When the great scholar *Jalal ad-din as-Suyuti 'Abd ar-Rahman [rahimah-Allahu ta'ala, d. Egypt, 911 A.H. (1505)]* said he had reached the grade of *ijtihad*, other contemporary scholars asked him about a question to which two different answers had been given and inquired of him to tell which answer was more dependable. He could not answer them. He said he was too busy to spare any time for it. Whereas, what he was asked to do was to employ *ijtihad* on a *fatwa*, which was the lowest degree of *ijtihad*. Seeing that such a deep scholar as *as-Suyuti* evaded employing *ijtihad* on a *fatwa*, what shall we call those who force people to employ absolute (*mutlaq*) *ijtihad*, if we should not call them mad or spiritually ignorant? *Al-Imam al-Ghazali* (39) (*rahimah-Allahu ta'ala*) reported in his book *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din* that there was no *mujtahid* in his time."

"If a non-*mujtahid* Muslim learns a *sahih* *hadith* and if it becomes hard for him to do the way (that disagrees with the *hadith*) of the *imam* of his *madhhab*, he has to search and find within the four *madhhabs* another *mujtahid* whose *ijtihad* was based on that *hadith* and do that affair of his in accordance with the *madhhab* that *mujtahid* belonged to. Great scholar *al-Imam Yahya an-Nawawi [rahimah-Allahu ta'ala, d. Damascus, 676 A.H. (1277)]* explained this in detail in his *Rawdat at-talibin*. For, it is not permissible for those who have not reached the grade of *ijtihad* to draw rules from the *Nass*, that is, the Book and the *Sunnat*. Now some ignoramuses claim that they have reached the grade of absolute *ijtihad*, that they can draw rules from the *Nass* and that they no longer need to follow one of the four *madhhabs*, and they abandon the *madhhab* they have followed for years. They attempt to refute the *madhhabs* with their unsound thoughts. They say such ignorant, stupid statements as, 'We will not follow the opinion of a religious man who was as ignorant as we are.' Deluded by Satan and provoked by the *nafs*, they claim superiority. They cannot realize that by saying so they reveal not their superiority but their stupidity and ignominy. Among these, we see also those heretical ignoramuses who say and write that everybody should read and derive rules from *tafsir* books and [the *Sahih* of] *al-Bukhari*. Oh My Muslim Brother! Completely avoid making friends with such idiots or supposing that they are religious men! Hold fast to the *madhhab* of your *imam*! You are free to choose whichever you like of the four *madhhabs*. But it is not permissible to collect the facilities (*rukhsas*) of the *madhhabs*, that is, to unify the *madhhabs*, which is called '*talfiq*'. (40)

"A Muslim who can read and understand hadiths well should learn the hadiths that are his madhhab's documents, then do the actions praised and shun those prohibited by the hadiths and learn the greatness and value of the Islamic religion, the perfection of Allahu ta'ala's and Rasulullah's (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) names and attributes, Rasulullah's life, his virtues and miracles, the order of this and the next worlds, of the Resurrection, of the Judgement and Paradise and Hell, angels, genies, ancient ummas, prophets and their books, the superiorities peculiar to Rasulullah and to the Qur'an al-karim, the lives of his Al (immediate relatives) and those of his Companions, the harbingers of the Last Day and many more items of information pertaining to this world and the next. All the information pertaining to this world and the next has been accumulated in Rasulullah's hadiths."

"When what we have written here is understood, it will become apparent how ignorant are those who say that those rules of Islam which were not derived from hadiths are useless. Among the innumerable items of information given in hadiths, those hadiths teaching 'ibadat and muamalat are very few. According to some scholars, there are about five hundred [including the repetitive ones, there are no more than three thousand]. It is not presumable that any one of the four aimmat al-madhahib might not have heard one sahih hadith among so few hadiths. Each sahih hadith was used as a document by at least one of the four aimmat al-madhahib. A Muslim who sees that some affair in his own madhhab is unsuitable with a sahih hadith should do the affair by following another madhhab which based its ijtihaad on that hadith. Perhaps the imam of his own madhhab also heard of the hadith, but, following another hadith which he understood was more sahih or was [said by the Prophet] later in date and annulled the former, or, for some other reasons known to mujtahids, he did not take the former hadith as a document. It is good for a Muslim who understands that the former hadith is sahih to give up his own madhhab's ijtihaad which is not suitable with the hadith and to follow the hadith, yet, in this case he has to follow another madhhab which used that hadith in its ijtihaad for this matter. For, the imam of that second madhhab, knowing those documents of the rules (ahkam) which he did not know, found out that there was nothing to deter acting upon that hadith. Nevertheless, it is as well permissible for him to carry out that affair in accordance with his own madhhab, for it is doubtless that the imam of his own madhhab relied upon a sound document in his ijtihaad. Islam deems it excusable for a muqallid not to know that document. For, none of the imams of the four madhhabs overflowed the Book and the Sunnat in ijtihaad. Their madhhabs are the explanations of the Book and the Sunnat. They explained the meanings and rules in the Book and the Sunnat for Muslims. They explained them in a way that Muslims can understand

them, and wrote them down in books. This work of the aimmat al-madhahib (rahimahum-Allahu ta'ala) was such a tremendous service to Islam that human power would not have sufficed for doing it if Allahu ta'ala had not helped them. [Existence of] these madhhabs is one of the most perfect evidences of the fact that Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) is the True Prophet and Islam is the True Religion."

"The difference in the ijtihaads of our aimmat al-madhahib were only in matters pertaining to furu' ad-din, that is, in matters of fiqh. There was no disagreement among them in respect to usul ad-din, that is, in the knowledge of itiqad or iman. Nor did they differ from one another in those teachings of furu' which are known to be essential in the religion and which were taken from those hadiths whose documents were reported by tawatur. They differed only in some aspects of knowledge concerning furu' ad-din. This arose from the difference in their understanding the soundness of the documents of these matters. And this little difference among them is [Allahu ta'ala's] compassion over the umma; it is permissible (jaiz) for Muslims to follow any madhhab

they like and find easy. Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) foretold this difference as glad tidings, and it has happened as he foretold."

"It is not permissible to employ ijtiḥad in the knowledge of itiqad, that is, in the facts to be believed. It gives way to deviation and heresy. It is a grave sin. There is only one correct path in matters pertaining to itiqad: ahl as-Sunnat wal-Jamaat. The difference which was declared to be [Allahu ta'ala's] compassion in the ḥadith ash-Sharīf was the difference in furu' or ahkam."

"In a matter on which the judgements of the four madhhabs differ from one another, only one of the judgements is correct. Those who do this correct way will be given two thawabs, and those who act according to one of the incorrect judgements will be given one thawab. That the madhhabs are compassion shows the fact that it is permissible to give up one madhhab and follow another. But it is not permissible to follow any madhhab - other than the four- that belongs to Ahl as-Sunnat, nor even as-Sahabat al-kiram, since their madhhabs were not put into written form and have been forgotten. There is now no possibility for following any madhhab other than the known four. Imam Abu Bakr Ahmad ar-Razi [rahimah-Allahu ta'ala, d. 370 A.H. (980)], too, reported that it had been declared unanimously by the 'ulama' of Islam that it was not permissible to follow [directly] as-Sahabat al-kiram. I recommend that those who want to understand well the superiority of the madhhabs, of mujtahids, especially of the four aimmat al-madhhahib, the fact that their madhhabs did not go beyond the Book and the Sunnat and that the rules which they conveyed through ijma' and qiyas were not their own opinions but were taken from the Book and the Sunnat, should read the books Al-mizan al-kubra and Al-mizan al-Khidriyya by Imam 'Abd al-Wahhab ash-Sharani (rahimah-Allahu ta'ala)."(41)

It is not correct to say, "Qur'an al-karim does not say 'religious scholars.' " Various ayats in praise of scholars ('ulama') and knowledge ('ilm). Hadrat 'Abd al-Ghani an-Nabulusi [d. 1143 A.H. (1731)] wrote in his Al-Hadiqa: "The 7th ayat of surat al-Anbiya says, 'Ask the men of dhikr what you do not know.' 'Dhikr' means 'knowledge'. This ayat karima commands those who know little to find scholars and learn from them." It is declared in the seventh ayat karima of surat Al 'Imran, "Only possessors of knowledge understand the meaning of inexplicit ayats"; in the 18th ayat karima of the same sura, "That Allahu ta'ala is existent and unique is understood and reported by possessors of knowledge"; in the 81st ayat karima of surat al-Qasas, "Possessors of knowledge said to them, 'Shame on you! The rewards Allahu ta'ala will give to those who believe and do good deeds are better than worldly favors"; in the 56th ayat karima of surat Rum, "Possessors of knowledge and belief will say, 'Well, this is the Day of Resurrection which you denied in the world"; in the 108th ayat karima of surat Isra, "Possessors of knowledge, upon hearing al-Qur'an al-karim, will prostrate and say, 'There is no defect in our Owner, who does not break His Word"; in the 54th ayat of surat Hajj, "Possessors of knowledge understand that al-Qur'an al-karim is the Word of Allah"; in the 50th ayat karima of surat Ankabut, "Al-Qur'an al-karim has settled in the hearts of possessors of knowledge"; in the sixth ayat karima of 'surat Saba', "Possessors of knowledge know that al-Qur'an al-karim is the Word of Allah and renders attaining to Allahu ta'ala's consent"; in the eleventh ayat karima of surat al-Mujadala, "High ranks will be granted to possessors of knowledge in Paradise"; in the 27th ayat karima of surat al-Fatir, "Only possessors of knowledge fear Allahu ta'ala"; in the 14th ayat karima of surat al-Hujurat, "Most valuable among you is the one who fears Allahu ta'ala much." It is declared in the ḥadiths quoted on the 365th page of the same book, "Allahu ta'ala and angels and all creatures pray for him who teaches people what is good"; 'On the Day of Judgement, first prophets, then scholars and then martyrs will intercede'; 'Oh Men! Be it known that knowledge can be acquired by listening to the scholar'; 'Learn knowledge! Learning knowledge is an 'ibada. The teacher and

the learner of knowledge will be given the reward of jihad. Teaching knowledge is like giving alms. Learning knowledge from the scholar is like performing midnight salat.' "Tahir Buhari(42), the author of the fatwa book Khulasa, states: "Reading fiqh books is more thawab than performing salat at nights. For, it is fard to learn the fards and harams from ['alims or their] books. To read fiqh books in order to carry out what is learned or to teach others is better than performing salat at-tasbih. It is declared in a hadith ash-Sharif, 'Learning knowledge is more thawab than all supererogatory 'ibadat, for it is useful both for oneself and for those whom one will teach'; 'The person who learns in order to teach others will be rewarded like Siddiqs.' The knowledge of Islam can be learned only from a master and from books. Those who say that the books of Islam and guides are unnecessary are liars or zindiqs. They deceive Muslims and lead them to ruination. The knowledge in religious books is derived from the Qur'an al-karim and the Hadith ash-Sharif." The translation from Hadiqa(43) ends here."

Allahu ta'ala sent His Messenger ('alaihi's-salam) so that he would communicate and teach the Qur'an al-karim. As-Sahabat al-kiram learned the knowledge in the Qur'an al-karim from Rasulullah. The scholars of Islam learned it from as-Sahabat al-kiram, and all Muslims learned it from the scholars of Islam and their books. It is declared in a hadith ash-Sharif, "Knowledge is a treasury. Its key is to ask and learn"; "Learn and teach knowledge!" "Everything has a source. The source of taqwa is the hearts of 'arifs." "Teaching knowledge is an atonement for sins."

Al-Imam ar-Rabbani (rahmat-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi) wrote in the 193 rd letter of the first volume of his work Maktubat:

"A responsible person [one at the age of puberty] first has to correct his iman, his faith. That is, to learn and believe faith as taught by the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat wal-Jamaat. May Allahu ta'ala give much thawabs to those great men for their endeavors. Amin. Escape from torture in the next world depends only upon learning and believing the knowledge which these great people deduced correctly. [Those who follow their path are called Sunni.] It is declared in a hadith ash-Sharif that one group will be saved from Hell, and they are those Muslims who follow in the footsteps of these scholars. The real Muslims who follow the path of Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) and his Companions (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anhum) are only these Muslims. The right and valuable knowledge derived from the Qur'an al-karim and the hadith ash-Sharifs, is the knowledge which the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat deduced from the Qur'an al-karim and the Hadith ash-Sharifs. For, every heretical man of religion carrying a Muslim name claims that his own heretical beliefs have been taken from the Qur'an al-karim and the Hadith ash-Sharif. Every person with wrong ideas and heresies says that he adapts himself to the Book and the Sunnat. It is seen that not what everybody understands and deduces from the Qur'an al-karim and the Hadith ash-Sharifs is right.

For learning the precise faith of Ahl as-Sunnat, the Persian book Al-mu'tamad, written by Hadrat Tur Pushti(44), the great Islamic scholar, which explains the true faith transmitted by the Ahl as-Sunnat scholars, is very estimable. The meaning in the book is very clear. It is easy to understand. The book was printed by Hakikat Kitabevi (Bookstore) in 1410 [1989 A.D.].

"After correcting 'aqa'id, the teachings to be believed, we should learn and obey halals, harams, fards, wajibs, sunnas, mandubs and makruhs from books of fiqh written by the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat. We should not read the heretical books published by ignorant people who could not understand these great scholars. Those Muslims who have a belief unconformable to the faith of Ahl as-Sunnat will not escape going to Hell in the next world may Allahu ta'ala protect s! If a Muslim whose faith is correct is slack in 'ibadat, he may be forgiven even if he does not make tawba. Even if he would not be forgiven, he will be saved from Hell after torture. The main thing

is to correct one's faith. Khwaja 'Ubaid- Allah al-Ahrar [qaddas-Allahu ta'ala sirrahu 'l-aziz, d. Samarqand, 895 A.H. (1490)] said, 'If I were given all the kashfs and all the karamat, yet were deprived of the faith of Ahl as-Sunnat, I would consider myself ruined. If I did not have any kashf or karama but had lots of faults, and if [only] the faith of Ahl as-Sunnat were bestowed on me, I wouldn't feel sorry.'

"Today, Muslims in India are very desolate. The enemies of Islam attack from every direction. One coin given for serving Islam today is more thawab than thousands of coins given some other time. The greatest service to be done for Islam is to get the books of Ahl as-Sunnat, which teach iman and Islam, and to distribute them to villagers and young people. A person who is vouchsafed this lot shall feel pleasure; he shall thank Allahu ta'ala profusely; he is so lucky, so fortunate. It is always a good deed to serve Islam. But at such a time as this, when Islam is weakened, when many efforts are made to annihilate Islam through lies and slanders, it is a much better deed to strive to disseminate the faith of Ahl as-Sunnat. Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) said to his companions, 'You live at such a time that if you obey nine-tenths of Allahu ta'ala's commands and prohibitions but disobey one, you will perish. You will be tortured! After you, there will come such a time that those who then obey only one tenth of the commands and prohibitions will be saved.' [These are written in Mishkat-ul mesabih, vol. 1, 179 th article and in Tirmizi, Kitab-al Fitan, 79 th article.] It is the present time that the hadith ash-Sharif points out. It is necessary to struggle against disbelievers, to know those who attack Islam and to dislike them.(45) For disseminating the books and words of the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat, one does not have to be a man of karama or a scholar. Every Muslim should struggle to do it. The opportunity should not be missed. On the Day of Judgement, every Muslim will be questioned on this and will be asked why they did not serve Islam. Those who do not strive to distribute the books teaching Islam and those who do not help people and institutions promulgating Islamic knowledge will be tortured very much. Excuse or pretext will not be accepted. Though prophets ('alaihimu 's- salam) were the highest and the most superior human beings, they never looked after their own comfort. In disseminating Allahu ta'ala's religion, the way to endless bliss, they strove day and night. To those who asked for miracles they replied that Allahu ta'ala created miracles, and their duty was to communicate Allahu ta'ala's religion. As they worked for this purpose, Allahu ta'ala helped them and created miracles. We, too, should disseminate the books and the sayings of the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat (rahimahum-Allahu ta'ala) and tell the youth and our friends the baseness of disbelievers and expose the lies of the enemies and of those who slander and persecute Muslims.(46) Those who do not work for this purpose through wealth, power or profession will not escape torture. While working for this purpose, suffering distress and persecution must be deemed as a great happiness and a big profit. Prophets ('alaihimu 's-salam), while communicating Allahu ta'ala's orders to people, underwent the attacks of ignorant and ignoble people. They suffered very much. Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam), Allahu ta'ala's Beloved, who was chosen to be the greatest of those great men said, 'No prophet suffered so much ill-treatment as I did.'"

Ahl as-sunnat scholars who showed the right path to all Muslims on the earth and guided us to learn the religion of Muhammad ('alaihi's-salam) without any change or interpolation are the scholars of the four madhhabs who reached the grade of ijtihaad. The most prominent ones of them are four. The first of them was al-Imam al-azam Abu Hanifa Numan ibn Thabit (rahimah-Allahu ta'ala). He was one of the greatest 'ulama' of Islam. He became the leader of Ahl as-Sunnat. His biography is written in the Turkish books Seadet-i Ebediyye and Faideli Bilgiler. He was born in Kufa in 80 A.H. [699] and was martyred in Baghdad in 150 [767].

The second one was the great scholar Imam Malik ibn Anas (rahimah-Allahu ta'ala). The book Ibn Abidin says that he lived eighty-nine years. His grandfather was Malik bin Abi Amir.

The third one was Imam Muhammad ibn Idris ash-Shafi'i (rahimah-Allahu ta'ala), who is the apple of the eyes of Islamic scholars. He was born in 150 [767] in Ghazza, Palestine, and passed away in Egypt in 204 [820].

The fourth one was Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (rahimah- Allahu ta'ala), who was born in Baghdad in 164 [780] and passed away there in 241 [855]. He is the archstone of the Islamic building.

Today, he who does not follow one of these four great imams is in great danger. He is in heresy. Besides them there were many other Ahl as-sunnat scholars who had righteous madhhabs, too. But in the course of time their madhhabs were forgotten and could not be committed to books. For instance, the seven great Medinan scholars who were called al-Fuqaha' as-saba and 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, Sufyan ibn 'Uyayna,(47) Ishaq ibn Rahawah, Dawud at-Tai, Amir ibn Sharahil ash-Shabi, Laith ibn Sad, 'A'mash, Muhammad ibn Jarir at-Tabari, Sufyan ath-Thawri [d. Basra, 161 A.H. (778)] and 'Abd ar-Rahman Awzai (rahimahum- Allahu ta'ala) were among them.

All the Sahabat al-kiram (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anhum ajmain) were rightfully the "stars" for guidance. Any of them would have sufficed to guide the whole world to the right path. They were mujtahids, each belonging in his own madhhab. Most of their madhhabs were alike. Yet, since their madhhabs were not written into books, it is not possible for us to follow them. The madhhabs of the four imams, that is, what they communicated about the things to be believed and about the things to be done, were gathered together and explained by their disciples. They were committed to books. Today every Muslim must belong to the madhhab of one of the above mentioned four imams and live up to and perform 'ibadat in accordance with that madhhab.(48)

Among the disciples of these four imams, two scholars reached very high grades in spreading the teachings of iman. Thus, there became two madhhabs in itiqad or iman. The right faith in accord with the Qur'an-al- karim and the Hadith ash-Sharifs, is only the faith shown by these two imams, who spread on the earth the faith of Ahl as-Sunnat, which is the Group of Salvation. One of them was Abu 'l-Hasan 'Ali al-Ashari (rahimah- Allahu ta'ala), who was born in Basra in 226 A.H. [879] and died in Baghdad in 330 [941]. The other was Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (rahimah- Allahu ta'ala), who died in Samarqand in 333 [944]. In iman, every Muslim has to follow one of these two great imams.

The paths (turuq) of the awliya' are right. Not to a smallest degree have they separated from Islam.(49) The awliya' do possess karamat. All their karamat are right and true. Al-Imam 'Abdullah al-Yafii [d. Mecca, 768 A.H. (1367)] said, "Ghawth ath-Thaqalain Mawlana 'Abd al-Qadir al-Geilani 's (qaddas-Allahu ta'ala sirrahu'l- aziz)(50) karamat have been so widely known that one cannot doubt or disbelieve them since tawatur (the state of being widespread) is a sanad (documentary evidence) for authenticity."

It is not permissible to call, by imitating others, a person who performs salat "disbeliever" unless his disbelief is understood from his saying, openly and without darura (strong necessity or compulsion), a word or his using something causing him to become a disbeliever. We cannot call down curses upon him unless it is certainly known that he has died as a disbeliever. It is not permissible to curse even a disbeliever. For this reason, it is better not to curse Yazid.

FOOTNOTES

(21) Those disbelievers who insidiously try to abolish Islam say, "Before becoming the Prophet, Muhammad ('alaihi-'s-salam) had sacrificed victims to idols," and give reference to non-madhhabite books as documents. The lines above prove that this statement is a lie.

(22) 'Rasul' is also translated as 'prophet' in the text.

(23) Today, in Arabia there are people called Wahhabis. They do not believe such hadiths. They call true Muslims who believe these hadiths "disbelievers." Though they, on account of explaining wrongly the inexplicit or dubious nasses away, do not become disbelievers, they become people of bidat. They greatly harm Muslims. Wahhabism originated from the heretical ideas of Ahmad Ibn Taymiyya [d. Damascus, 728 A.H. (1328)]. It spread out among the Turks and everywhere through the books of an Egyptian named Muhammad 'Abduh [d. Egypt, 1323 A.H. (1905)]. The scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat pointed out in hundreds of their books that the Wahhabis were not the followers of a fifth madhhab, but those who are in heresy and on a wrong path. Also detailed information is given in Endless Bliss and Advice for the Muslim. May Allahu ta'ala protect young men with religious duty from falling into the path of Wahhabism, and may He not disconnect us from the right path of the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat, who are praised greatly in many hadiths! Amin.

(24) The Ismaili heretics and the enemies of faith disguised as Islamic scholars try to deceive the youth by saying and writing that the Miraj was not a bodily ascent but a spiritual state (hal). We should not buy such corrupt books; we should not be deceived by them.

(25) See also our Endless Bliss, Third Fascicle. Qadi 'Iyad al-Maliki, author of Shifa', passed away in Morocco in 544 A.H. (1150).

(26) The heretical people called Qadianis, or Ahmadis, who were organized by the British in India in the lunar Hijri year 1296 (1880), tell slanderous lies about 'Isa ('alaihi 's-salam), too. Though they claim to be Muslims, they strive to abolish Islam from within. A fatwa has been issued on that they are not Muslims.

(27) It can now be understood by this statement about Abu Bakr as-Siddiq (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh) how poor and how ignorant are those who think and write that RasulAllah ('alaihi's-salam) worshipped idols before his nubuwwa.

(28) Hasan bin Ali passed away because of being poisoned in Madina-i Munawwara in [669 A.D.].

(29) If blood relationship were the only criterion for superiority, Hadrat 'Abbas should have been regarded superior to Hadrat 'Ali. Moreover, Abu Talib and Abu Lahab, who were very close in respect of blood, did not even have the honor and superiority existing in the lowest believer.

(30) For example, it is declared in the hadith as-Sharif on the 298 th page of Al-Hadiqa that 'Amr ibn al-As (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh) was a mujtahid.

(31) Hadrat Muawiya bin Abu Sufyan passed away in Damascus in 60 [680 A.D.].

(32) 'Amr Ibni al-As passed away in Egypt in 43 [663 A.D.].

(33) For more detailed information, please read the English books Advice for the Muslim and Endless Bliss, and also the Arabic Al-minhat al-wahbiyya fi 'r-raddi 'l-Wahhabiyya, At-tawassuli bi 'n-Nabi wa jahalat 'l-Wahhabiyyin and Sabil an-najat and the Persian Saif al-abrar. These works and the valuable books written in refutation to ahl al-bidat are published by Hakikat Bookstore in Istanbul. Both in Radd al-mukhtar, (written by Muhammad Emin Ibni Abidin who passed away in Damascus in 1252 [1836 A.D.] (volume III, the chapter on "Baghi") and in the Turkish Nimat-i Islam (the chapter on "Nikah"), it is clearly written that the Wahhabis are Ibahatis. Ayyub Sabri Pasha [d. 1308 A.H. (1890)], Rear-Admiral during the time of Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid Khan II, in his Turkish works Mirat al-Haramain and Ta'rikh-i Wahhabiyyan, and Ahmad Jawdat Pasha, in the seventh volume of his Turkish Ottoman History, explained in detail about the Wahhabis. Also Yusuf an-Nabhani, in his Arabic work Shawahid al-haqq (3rd ed. Cairo, 1385/1965), refuted the Wahhabis and Ibn Taymiyya at length. Fifty pages of his work

have been reproduced in the Arabic book 'Ulama' al-Muslimin wa Wahhabiyyun (Istanbul, 1972).

(34) Mawdudi is the founder of the association in India named Jamaatul-Islamiyya. He died in 1399.

(35) Sayyid Qutb was put to death in Egypt in 1386 [1966 A.D.]

(36) Rashid Rida is the disciple of Muhammad Abduh. He died in 1354 [1935 A.D.].

(37) This ayat shows that not everybody can understand the Book and the Sunnat correctly. It commands those who cannot understand them not to try personally to understand the Qur'an al-karim or the Hadith ash-Sharif but to learn them by asking those who have understood them. If everybody had understood the meanings in the Qur'an al-karim and the Hadith ash-Sharif correctly, the seventy-two heretical groups would not have appeared. All of those who started these groups were deeply learned, but none was able to understand the meanings in the Qur'an al-karim and the Hadith ash-Sharif correctly. Misunderstanding them, they deviated from the right path and caused millions of Muslims to end up in perdition. Some of them have been very excessive in giving wrong meanings to ayats and hadiths so much so that they have become as heretical as to call Muslims of the right path 'disbelievers' and 'polytheists'. In the book titled Kashf ash-shubuhah, which has been translated into Turkish and slipped into Turkey in a clandestine way, it is said that it is mubah (permitted) to kill and confiscate the property of those Muslims who hold the faith of Ahl as-Sunnat.

(38) See page 59.

(39) Imam-i Muhammad Ghazali passed away in the city of Tus in 505 [1111 A.D.].

(40) 'Talfiq' means 'performance of an act by unifying or mixing the easy ways of madhhabs and in a way which is not compatible with any of them'. After one carries out an act according to one of the four madhhabs, that is, after his performance is sahih (valid, suitable) in that madhhab, his observing additionally as many as possible of the conditions that are put in the other three madhhabs with the view that the act shall be sahih and acceptable also in these madhhabs is called 'taqwa', which is very reward-deserving.

(41) Yusuf an-Nabhani, Hujjat-Allahi 'ala 'l-'alamin, p. 771-. The above quotation, which is translated from the Arabic original, does not contain any words added by the translators, who, as done in all our books, has put additions from other books in blocked brackets here, too, to prevent confusing them with the translated text. The Arabic original of the above passage from Hujjat-Allahi 'ala 'l-'alamin was reproduced by offset in Istanbul in 1394 (1974).

(42) Tahir Buhari passed away in 542 [1147 A.D.].

(43) The author of the book Hadiqa passed away in 1143 [1731 A.D.].

(44) Fadlullah bin Hasen Tur Pushti, a Hanafi fiqh scholar, passed away in 661 A.H. (1263).

(45) Jihad through force (jihad qatli) is made by the State, by its army. Muslims' making jihad is their undertaking as soldiers, the duty given to them by the State. That jihad qawli, that is made through speech and writing, is better than jihad qatli is also written in the 65 th letter.

(46) Telling them will not be gossip but al-amru bi'l-maruf. Every Muslim has to learn the faith of Ahl as-Sunnat and teach it to people whom he can influence. Books, magazines and papers explaining the words of the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat should be bought and sent to young brothers and acquaintances. We should strive hard in order that they read them. Also, books exposing the real purposes of the enemies of Islam should be distributed.

(47) Sufyan bin 'Uyayna passed away in the city of Mecca in 198 [813 A.D.].

(48) A person who does not want to follow one of these four madhhabs does not belong to Ahl as-Sunnat. See page 9.

(49) In every century there have been liars and heretics who made the religion a means for their worldly advantages and who came forward in disguise of walis, murshids or men of religious authority. Still there are evil people in every profession, in every branch of crafts and in every official post today. Seeing those who look for their advantages and pleasures in others' harm, it would be injustice or ignorance to blemish all crafts and people with whom they are mixed. It would help factious people. For this reason, the existence of heretical men of religion and ignorant, false men of turuq should not cause us to speak ill of the 'ulama' of Islam or great men of tasawwuf whose services have filled up honorable pages in history. We should realize that those who slander them are unjust.

BELIEF IN THE LAST DAY

5. The fifth of the six fundamentals of iman is "to believe in the Last Day (al-Yawm al-akhir)." It begins on the day when a person dies and continues till the end of Doomsday. The reason it is called the "Last Day" is because there is no night to come after it, or because it comes after the world. The "Day" mentioned in this hadith ash-Sharif is not like the day or night we know. It denotes some time. It was not made known when Doomsday will occur. No one could estimate its time. Nevertheless, our Prophet (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) pointed out many of its harbingers and precedents: Hadrat al-Mahdi (51) will come; 'Isa ('alaihi 's-salam) will descend to Damascus from heaven; ad-Dajjal (52) will appear; people called Yajuj and Majuj (53) will put the whole world into turmoil; the sun will rise from the west; violent earthquakes will occur; religious knowledge will be forgotten; vice and evil will increase; irreligious, immoral, dishonest people will become leaders; Allahu ta'ala's orders will be forbidden; harams will be committed everywhere; fire will come out of Yaman; seas and mountains will split into pieces; the sun and the moon will darken; seas will mix with each other, boil and dry up.

A Muslim who does sinful acts is called fasiq. Fasiqs and all disbelievers will be tortured ('adhab) in their graves. These are certainly to be believed. After interment, the deceased will return to an unknown life and will be either at ease or in torture. As it was declared in hadith ash-Sharifs, two angels named munkar and nakir, in the guise of two unknown horrible people, will come to his grave and question him. Questions in the grave will be on some fundamentals of iman according to some scholars or on the whole of iman to some others. For this reason, we should teach our children the answers to the following questions: Who is your rabb (Allah)? What is your religion? Whose umma (which prophet's community) do you belong to? What is [the name of] your Holy Book? What is your qibla? What are your madhhabs in iman and in 'ibadat (or 'amal)? It is written in Tazkirat al-Qurtubi (54) that those who are not Ahl as-Sunnat will not be able to answer correctly. The graves of those who will give precise answers will enlarge and a window will be opened to Paradise. Every morning and every evening they will see their places in Paradise, and angels will do them favors and give them good news. He who cannot answer precisely will be beaten with iron mallets so severely that every creature but mankind and genies will hear him cry out. His grave will become so tight that he will feel as if his bones would intertwine. A hole will be opened to Hell. In the morning and in the evening he will see his place in Hell. He will be tortured bitterly in his grave till the Resurrection.

It is necessary to believe in [the other] life after death. After the flesh and bones rot and turn into earth and gas, they will come together again; the souls will enter the bodies they belong to, and everybody will rise up from his grave. Therefore, this time is called the Day of Qiyama (Resurrection).(55)

All living creatures will gather at the place of Mahshar. The deed-books will fly to their owners. Almighty Allah, the creator of the earth, heavens, stars and all particles, will make all these happen. Allahu ta'ala's Messenger (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) reported that these will happen. It is for certain that what he said is true. All will certainly happen.

The deed-books of the pious (salih), the good people, will be given from their right, and those of the sinful (fasiq), the bad people will be given from their back or left. Every action, good or evil, big or little, done secretly or openly, will be in that book. Even those deeds unknown to the kiram katibin angels will be revealed by the human organs' witnessing and by Allahu ta'ala, who knows everything, and there will be questioning and settlement of accounts on every action. During the Day of Judgement, every secret action will be revealed if Allahu ta'ala will it so. Angels will be questioned on what they have done on the earth and in the heavens, prophets ('alaihi 's-salam) on how they communicated Allahu ta'ala's commands and His religion to men, and people on how they adapted themselves to prophets, how they lived up to the duties revealed to them, and on how they took care of one another's rights. On the Day of Judgement, those who have iman and whose actions and morals are beautiful will be rewarded and blessed, and people with a bad temper and wrong deeds will be punished severely.

Allahu ta'ala, with His Justice, will torture some Muslims for their small sins and He will, with His Mercy, forgive grave and small sins of some other Muslims whom He wills. Except disbelief (kufr) and polytheism (shirk), He will forgive every sin if He wills, and He will torture for a small sin if He wills. He declares that He will never forgive disbelief and polytheism. Disbelievers with or without a heavenly Book, that is, those who do not believe that Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam) is the Prophet for all human beings and who disapprove even one of the rules [orders and prohibitions] he communicated, will certainly be put into Hell and tortured eternally.

On the Day of Judgement, there will be a Mizan ('balance'), different from those we know, for weighing deeds and conduct. It will be so large that one of its scales can hold the earth and the sky. The scale for good deeds will be bright and to the right of the 'Arsh where Paradise is, and the scale for sins will be dark and to the left of the 'Arsh where Hell is. Actions, words, thoughts and looks that are done in the world will take shapes there, and the good deeds in bright figures and the evils in dark and ugly figures will be weighed on this balance, which does not resemble worldly balances; it was said that the scale carrying the heavier load will go up and the one carrying the lighter load will go down. According to some scholars, there will be various balances. And many others said, "It was not shown clearly in Islam how and how many the balances will be, so it would be better not to think of it."

There will be a bridge called Sirat, which will be built over Hell upon Allahu ta'ala's command. Everybody will be ordered to cross that bridge. That day, all prophets will entreat as, "Oh Allah! Give safety!" Those who are to go to Paradise will cross the bridge easily and reach Paradise. Some of them will pass with the speed of lightning, some with that of wind, and some others like a galloping horse. The Sirat Bridge will be thinner than a hair and sharper than a sword. Adapting yourself to Islam in this world has a similar aspect; adapting yourself precisely to Islam is like crossing the Sirat. Those who withstand the difficulty of struggling with their sensual desires (the nafs) here will cross the Sirat easily there. Those who do not follow Islam because of the nafs will cross the Sirat with difficulty. For this reason, Allahu ta'ala called the right path,

pointed out by Islam, the "Sirat al- Mustaqim." This similarity in names shows that staying within Islam's path is like crossing the Sirat. Those who deserve Hell will fall off the Sirat down into Hell.

There will be a body of water called Hawd al-Kawthar reserved for our master Muhammad Mustafa (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam). It will be vast like a journey of one month. Its water will be whiter than milk, and its scent will be more pleasant than musk. The drinking glasses around it are more plentiful than stars. A person who drinks its water would never get thirsty again even if he were in Hell.

It must be believed that there will be shafa'a (intercession). Prophets, walis, pious Muslims, angels and those who are allowed by Allah will intercede for the forgiveness of the small and grave sins of those Muslims who die without having repented, and their intercession will be accepted. [Our Prophet (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) declared, "I will make shafa'a (intercession) for those who commit grave sins of my umma." In the next world, shafa'a will be of five sorts:

Firstly, the sinful, getting tired of the crowd and of waiting so long at the place of Judgement, will wail and ask that the Judgement commence as soon as possible. There will be shafa'a for this.

Secondly, there will be shafa'a so that the questioning will be done easily and quickly.

Thirdly, there will be shafa'a for the sinful Muslims so that they shall not fall off the Sirat into Hell and so that they shall be saved from Hell's torture.

Fourthly, there will be shafa'a for taking gravely sinful Muslims out of Hell.

Fifthly, there will be shafa'a for the promotion of Muslims to a higher grade in the Paradise where, though there will be innumerable favors and an eternal stay, there will be eight grades and every person's grade will be in proportion to the degree of his iman and deeds.

Paradise and Hell exist now. Paradise is above the seven heavens. Hell is below everything. There are eight paradises and seven hells. Paradise is larger than the earth, the sun and the heavens, and Hell is much larger than the sun.

FOOTNOTES

(50) Abdulqadir Geilani passed away in Baghdad in 561 [1161 A.D.].

(51) Hadrat al-Mahdi will be a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam). His name will be Muhammad and his father's name will be 'Abdullah. He will preside over Muslims, strengthen Islam and spread it everywhere. He will meet 'Isa ('alaihi 's-salam), and together they will fight and kill ad-Dajjal. During his time, Muslims will settle everywhere and live in comfort and ease.

(52) Ad-Dajjal (who is called Antichrist by Christians, and who will also be called Masih because his fame will spread over the world) will be a son of a Jew of Khurasan, northern Iran, and an enemy of Islam commanding innumerable soldiers. He will kill Muslims and bring discomfort and disorder to the Middle East. After shedding much blood, he will be killed by Hadrat al-Mahdi. It is written with references in Mukhtasaru Tazkirat al-Qurtubi by 'Abd al-Wahhab ash-Sharani (2nd ed., Istanbul, 1302) that ad-Dajjal's name will be Ibn as-Sayyad.

(53) It is written in the Qur'an al-karim that Yajuj and Majuj are two evil peoples, who, at a very ancient time, were left behind a wall, and that they will spread on the earth towards the end of the world. Considering that archaeological research finds cities buried under the ground and sea fossils on the peaks of mountains, that wall does not have to have been found yet, nor do those peoples have to be so numerous that we see or know them today; it can be thought that, as thousands of millions of today's

people originated out of two people, those two people will spread on the earth multiplying out of a few people, whose place may not be known today.

(54) Muhammad Qurtubi Maliki, the author of the book Tazkirat al-Qurtubi passed away in 671 [1272 A.D.].

(55) Plants absorb carbon dioxide from the air and water and salts (mineral substances) from the soil and unite them with one another and form organic substances, the living matter of our organs. It is known today that a chemical reaction taking years happens in less than a second when a catalyst is used. Similarly, Allahu ta'ala will unite water, carbon dioxide and mineral substances in graves and create organic substances and the living organs in a moment. Mukhbir-i sadiq (the Truth Reporter, the Prophet) reported that we would come to the other life in this manner. And science shows that this is being done in the world.

BELIEF IN QADAR (DESTINY)

6. The last of the six fundamentals of iman is "to believe in qadar, [that is] that good (khair) and evil (sharr) are from Allahu ta'ala. good and evil, advantage and harm, profit and loss coming upon human beings are all by Allahu ta'ala's Will. 'Qadar' means 'measuring a quantity; decision, order; muchness and largeness.' Allahu ta'ala's Eternal Will for the existence of something is called qadar (predestination). The [instance of] occurrence of qadar, that is, the thing willed, is called qada'. Qada' and qadar are also used interchangeably. Accordingly, qada' means Allahu ta'ala's predestination in eternity of things that have been and will be created from eternity in the past to the everlasting future, and qadar means the [instance of] creation of anything just compatibly with qada', neither less nor more. In eternal past, Allahu ta'ala knew everything that would happen. This knowledge of His is called qada' and qadar. Ancient Greek philosophers called it al-'inayat al-azaliyya (the eternal favor). All creatures came about from the qada'. Also the creation of things according to His knowledge in the past eternity is called qada' and qadar. In believing qadar we should know for certain and believe that if Allahu ta'ala willed in eternity to create something, it certainly has to exist just as He willed, neither less nor more; nonexistence of things He determined to create, or existence of things He determined not to create, is impossible. All animals, plants, non-living creatures [solids, liquids, gases, stars, molecules, atoms, electrons, electromagnetic waves, every movement of every creature, physical events, chemical and nuclear reactions, relations of energy, physiological events in the living creatures] existence or nonexistence of everything, good and evil deeds of human beings, their punishment in this world and in the next world and everything existed in Allahu ta'ala's Knowledge in eternity. He knew all in eternity. Things that happen from eternity in the past to everlasting future, their peculiarities, movements and every event, are created by Him in accord with what He knew in eternity. All the good and evil deeds of human beings, their belief or disbelief in Islam, all their actions, done willingly or unwillingly, are created by Allahu ta'ala. He alone is the One who creates and makes everything that happens through a sabab (cause, means, intermediary). He creates everything through some means.

For example, fire burns. In reality, Allahu ta'ala is the One who creates burning. Fire does not have anything to do with burning. But His Custom (Adat) is such that unless fire touches something He does not create burning.(56) Allahu ta'ala alone is the One who burns. He can burn without fire as well, but it is His Custom to burn with fire. If He wills not to burn, He prevents

burning even in fire. He did not burn Ibrahim ('alaihi 's-salam)) in fire; because He loved him very much, He suspended His Custom. (57)

If Allahu ta'ala had willed, He could have created everything without means, burning without fire, nourish us without us eating and make us fly without an airplane, and hear from a long distance without a radio. But He did men the favor of creating everything through some intermediaries. He willed to create certain things through certain intermediaries. He did His works under intermediaries. He concealed His Power behind intermediaries. He who wants Him to create something holds on to its means and thus obtains it. (58)

If Allahu ta'ala did not create His works through intermediaries, no one would need anybody else; everybody would ask everything directly from Allahu ta'ala and would have recourse to nothing; there would not be social relations between people such as the superior and the subordinate, foreman and workman, pupil and teacher and so forth, and thus this and the next world would be in disorder and there would not be any difference between the beautiful and the loathsome, good and evil, the obedient and the disobedient.

If Allahu ta'ala had willed, He would have created His Custom in some other way and He would have created everything according to it. For example, if He had willed, He would have put disbelievers, those who are addicted to pleasures in the world, those who hurt others and the deceitful into Paradise, and He would have put the faithful, worshippers and the benevolent into Hell. But ayats and hadiths show that He did not will so.

He is the One who creates all optional or voluntary and involuntary actions and movements of human beings. He created ikhtiyar (option) and irada (will) in born servants for His creating their optional, voluntary actions, and made this option and will a means for creating their actions. When man wants to do something, Allahu ta'ala creates this action if He wills, too. If man does not want or will and if Allahu ta'ala does not will, either, He does not create. Allahu ta'ala creates upon not only man's wish; He creates if He wills, too. Allahu ta'ala's creating man's optional actions is similar to when fire touches something, He creates burning of that thing, and if fire does not touch it, He does not create burning. When a knife touches something, He creates cutting. It is not the knife but He who cuts. He has made the knife a means for cutting. In other words, He creates man's optional actions for the reason (sabab) that he opts, prefers and wills these actions. However, the movements in nature do not depend on man's option, but are created through some other causes when only Allahu ta'ala wills. There is no creator besides Him, who alone creates every motion of everything, of suns, particles, drops, cells, germs and atoms, their substances and properties. Yet there is a difference between the movements of the lifeless substances and the optional, voluntary actions of man and animal: when a man or an animal opts, prefers and wills an action and if He wills, too, He makes him or it act, and He creates his or its action. Man's action is not in man's power. He does not even know he acts. (59) There is no option in the movements of the lifeless. Allahu ta'ala creates burning when fire touches something, and it is not through fire's preferring or opting to burn (60).

Man's optional actions happen after two circumstances. First, his heart's option, will and power are involved. For this reason, man's actions are called kasb (acquirement), which is an attribute of man. Second, Allahu ta'ala's creation takes place. Allahu ta'ala's orders, prohibitions, rewards and tortures are all because kasb has been given to man. In the ninety- sixth ayat of the surat as-Saffat, He says, "Allah created you and He created your actions." This ayat not only shows the existence of kasb, or the heart's option and iradat juz'iyya (partial free will) in the actions of man and the nonexistence of any compulsion -for this reason, [actions may be attributed to man and]

it may be said "man's actions" as we say, "Ali hit and broke"- but also points out that everything is created with qada' and qadar.

For the creation of man's actions, first his heart has to opt and will it. Man wills actions which are within his power. This will or wish is called kasb (acquirement). The late Amidi said that the kasb caused and had effect in the creation of actions. But it is not wrong to say that kasb does not have any effect in the creation of an optional action since the action wished by man and the one created are not different from each other. Then, man cannot do whatever he wants; things which he does not want may happen, too. If man did everything he wanted and if anything he did not wish would not happen, then he would not be a man but one who would claim divinity. Allahu ta'ala pitied and favored His human creatures and gave them power and energy just as much as they needed to observe His commands and prohibitions. For example, a person who is healthy and rich enough can perform hajj once in his life; he can fast [during the days of] one month a year when he sees the Ramadan moon in the sky; he can perform the five-times-a-day, fard salat; he who has as much money or property as the amount of nisab can give one-fortieth of it in gold or silver to Muslims as zakat one Hijri year after his money or property surpasses nisab. So, man does his optional actions if he wants and he does not if he does not want to. Allahu ta'ala's greatness is understood here, too. Because the ignorant and idiots cannot comprehend the knowledge of qada' and qadar, they do not believe what the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat said and doubt the power and option in man. They think that man is incapable and compelled in his optional actions. Seeing that man cannot act optionally in some cases, they speak ill of Ahl as-Sunnat. This wrong conduct of theirs shows that they do have will and option.

Ability to do or not to do an action is a matter of qudra (power). Preferring, wanting to do or not to do an action is called ikhtiyar (option). Wishing to do what is opted is called irada (will). [The inclination] to accept something or not to disapprove of it is called rida' (consent). When power and will come together where 'will' is effective in the occurrence of something, Khalq (Creation) takes place. If they come together without being effective, it is called kasb (acquirement). Anyone who opts is not necessarily a creator. Similarly, it is not necessary to give consent to everything willed. Allahu ta'ala is called Khaliq (Creator) and Mukhtar (One having Option), and man is called kasib (possessor of acquirement) and mukhtar (one having option).

Allahu ta'ala wills and creates the 'ibadat and sins of His servants. Yet He likes 'ibadat and dislikes sins. Everything comes into existence by His Will and Creation. In the 102 nd ayat of the surat al-Anam, He declares: "There is no god but Him. He alone is the Creator of everything."

The Mutazila, being unable to see the difference between will and consent, were confused and said, "Man himself creates the action he wishes." They denied qada' and qadar. The Jabriyya were altogether confused; they could not understand that there might be option without creation. Thinking that there was no option in man, they likened him to stone and wood. They said may Allahu ta'ala forbend! "Men are not sinners. It is Allah who makes all sins committed." If there were not will and option in men and if Allahu ta'ala caused evils and sins to be done by force as the members of the Jabriyya said, there would not be any difference between the movements of a man who is thrown down from the mountain with fastened hands and feet and those of a man who walks down looking around. Whereas, the former is compelled to roll down by force and the latter descends with his will and option. Those who cannot see the difference between them are the short-sighted people who also disbelieve the ayats. They consider Allahu ta'ala's orders and prohibitions unnecessary and out of place. To presume that man himself creates what he wishes, as this group called the Mutazila or Qadariyya believed, is to disbelieve the ayat karima, "Allahu ta'ala alone is the Creator of everything," as well as to ascribe man a partner to Allahu ta'ala.

The Shiites, like the Mutazila, say that man himself creates what he wants. As a support they say that the ass does not cross the mill though it is thrashed. They do not ever think that if a man wills to do something and if Allahu ta'ala does not will it to be done, these two wills cannot happen at the same time: if what Allahu ta'ala wills happens, then what the Mutazila say is wrong, that is, a man can neither create nor do everything he wants; if whatever man willed happened, like they say, then Allahu ta'ala would have been incapable and unsuccessful. Allahu ta'ala is far from being incapable. Only what He wills happens. He is the only One who creates everything. And such is Allahu ta'ala. It is very loathsome to say and write words like, "Man created this," "We created that," or "They created that." (61) It is rudeness towards Allahu ta'ala. It causes disbelief (62).

FOOTNOTES

(56) Fire does nothing except to heat up to the ignition temperature. It is not fire that unites carbon and hydrogen with oxygen in organic substances or that supplies electron movements. Those who cannot realize the truth presume that fire does these. It is neither fire, nor oxygen, nor heat, nor the electron movement that burns or makes this reaction of burning. Only Allahu ta'ala is the One who burns it. He created each of these as means for burning. A person lacking knowledge thinks that fire burns. A boy who finishes elementary school disapproves of the statement "fire burns." He says, "The air burns," instead. A person who finishes junior high school does not accept this. He says, "The oxygen in the air burns." A person who finishes high school says that burning is not peculiar to oxygen, but any element attracting electron burns. A university student takes into consideration energy as well as matter. It is seen that the more a person knows the closer he gets to the inside of a matter and realizes that there are many causes behind the things regarded as causes. Prophets ('alaihimu 's-salam), who were in the highest degree of knowledge and science and who could see the reality of everything, and the 'ulama' of Islam, who, following in their footsteps, attained drops from their oceans of knowledge, pointed out that each of the things supposed to be combustive or constructive today was an incapable and poor causal means put as an intermediary by the Real Creator.

(57) As a matter of fact, Allahu ta'ala created substances to prevent the burning of fire. Chemists discover these substances.

(58) He who wants to light a lamp uses matches; he who wants to extract oil from olive uses crushing tools; he who has a headache takes an aspirin; he who wants to go to Paradise and attain infinite favors adapts himself to Islam; he who shoots himself with a pistol or who drinks poison will die; he who drinks water when in a sweat will get sick; he who commits sins and loses his iman will go to Hell. Whichever intermediary a person applies, he will get the thing for which that intermediary has been made a means. He who reads Islamic books learns Islam, likes it, and becomes a Muslim. He who lives amongst the irreligious and listens to what they say becomes ignorant of Islam. Most of those who are ignorant of Islam become disbelievers. When a person gets on a vehicle, he goes to the place it has been assigned to go.

(59) His each action is a result of so many physical and chemical events.

(60) Allahu ta'ala, too, wishes and creates the good, useful wishes of those servants of His whom He loves and pities. He does not wish or create the realization of their evil and harmful wishes. Always good, useful deeds are done by those beloved servants. They regret having been unable to do many things, but if they thought and knew that those deeds were not created because otherwise they would have been harmful, they would not be sorry at all. Instead, they would be pleased with it and would thank Allah, who willed in eternity that He would create men's optional, voluntary actions after their hearts' opting and willing them; He willed it so. If He had

not willed it so in eternity, He would always create even our optional actions by force, involuntarily, without our wishing them. His creating our optional actions after we wish them is because He willed it so in eternity. Then, the only dominant factor is His Will.

(61) As explained above, man's optional actions happen through many physical, chemical and physiological events, which do not depend on his will and which he is not even conscious of. A reasonable scientist who has realized this subtlety would be ashamed to say, "I have done," let alone saying, "I have created," about his optional actions. He would feel modest in front of Allahu ta'ala. A person with little knowledge, understanding and modesty, however, does not feel ashamed to say anything at any place. Allahu ta'ala has mercy upon all people on the earth. He creates whatever they need and sends them to everybody. Obviously He notifies them of what they should do so that they can live in this world in peace and happiness, and attain the endless bliss of the next world. He guides to the right path whomever He wishes among those who left the true way and followed the way to kufr (infidelity) and heresy as a result of being deceived by their own nafs (human desires), bad friends, harmful books, and media. He pulls them towards the right path. He does not bestow this blessing upon those who are cruel, and exceed the limits. He lets them stay in the swamp of disbelief where they dropped in and liked and desired.

(62) The translation of the book Itiqad-nama is completed here. Haji Faydullah Effendi, who did this translation, was from Kamah, a town of Erzincan. He lectured as a professor in the town of Soke [in Turkey] for many years, and passed away in 1323 [1905 A.D.]. Mawlana Halid-i Baghdadi Osmani (Quddisa sirruh), the author of the book, was born in the hegira year 1192 in the city of Shahrazur, in the north of Baghdad, and passed away in Damascus in 1242 [1826 A.D.]. He is called Osmani because he comes from the family tree of Hadrat Uthman-i Zinnurain (radi-Allahu 'anh). While teaching his brother Mawlana Mahmud Sahib about the second hadith in the book Hadith-i Arbain by Imam-i Nawawi, the well-known Hadith-i Jibril, Mawlana Mahmud-i Sahib requested his elder brother to write an explanation of this hadith ash-Sharif. Mawlana Khalid, (rahmatullahi 'alaih) accepted this request in order to please the bright heart of his brother and explained this hadith ash-Sharif in Persian.

TWO LETTERS BY SHARAF AD-DIN MUNIRI (rahimah-Allahu ta'ala)

Sharaf ad-din Ahmad ibn Yahya Muniri (d. in 782 A.H./1380), one of the great Islamic scholars educated in India, wrote in the 18 th letter of his Persian book Maktubat (63):

"Most people go wrong by acting upon doubts and illusions. Some of such ill-thinking people say, 'Allahu ta'ala does not need our 'ibadat. Our 'ibadat do Him no good. It is indifferent to His Greatness whether people worship Him or disobey Him. Those who perform 'ibadat suffer trouble and bother themselves in vain.' This reasoning is wrong; those who do not know Islam say so because they think that 'ibadat are commanded because they are useful to Allahu ta'ala. This is a very wrong supposition that makes one mistake impossible for possible. Any 'ibada done by anybody is useful to himself only. Allahu ta'ala declares clearly in the eighteenth ayat of the surat Fatir that this is so. A person who bears this wrong thought is like a sick person whom the doctor recommends to diet but who does not diet and says, 'It won't harm the doctor if I don't diet.' He is right to say that it will not harm the doctor. But it will harm him. The doctor recommends him to diet not because it will be useful to the doctor himself but to cure the

patient's disease. If he follows the doctor's advice he will recover. If he does not, he will die, and this will not harm the doctor at all."

"Some other wrong-thinking people never perform any 'ibada nor stop committing prohibitions (harams). That is, they do not obey Islam. They say, 'Allah is Karim and Merciful. He pities His human servants very much. His Forgiveness is endless. He will not torture anybody.' Yes, they are right in their first statement, but wrong in their last statement. The Devil deceives and misleads them to disobedience. A reasonable person will not be deceived by the Devil. Allahu ta'ala is not only Karim and Merciful, but also He will torture very vehemently, very bitterly. We witness that He makes many people live in poverty and trouble in this world. He makes, without hesitation, many of His servants live in torment. Though He is very Merciful and the Razzaq (Sustainer), He will not give even one morsel of bread unless one undertakes the trouble of agriculture and farming. Though He is the One who keeps everybody alive, He will not let a person survive without eating and drinking. He will not cure a sick person who does not take medicine. He created means for all the worldly blessings such as living, not becoming sick and owning property, and showed no mercy in depriving those who would not hold fast to the means of the worldly blessings. So is the case with attaining the blessings of the next world. He made disbelief and ignorance poisons fatal to the soul. And laziness makes the soul sick. If medicine is not used, the soul will become sick and die. The one and only medicine for disbelief and ignorance is knowledge and marifa. And the medicine for laziness is to perform salat and all kinds of 'ibadat. In this world, if a person takes poison and then says, 'Allah is Merciful, and He will protect me against the harm of poison,' he will get sick and die. If a person with diarrhoea drinks castor oil [or if a diabetic eats sugar or starchy food], he will get worse. To follow one's lust (shahwa), that is, to do the desires of the nafs, makes his heart sick. If a person believes that following his lust is a sin and is harmful, his following the lust will not kill his heart. If he disbelieves its harm, it will kill his heart, because he who disbelieves becomes a disbeliever. And disbelief is a poison for the heart and soul."

"Another group of wrong-thinkers undergo riyada by suffering hunger, with the view of eradicating their lust (shahwa), wrath (ghadab) and sensual desires, which are disapproved by Islam. They think that Islam commands them to be eradicated. After suffering hunger for a long time, they see that these evil desires of theirs have not perished, and conclude that Islam commands something which cannot be done. They say, 'This command of Islam cannot be done. Man cannot get rid of the habits existing in his nature. To try to get rid of them is like striving to make a colored person white. To try to do something impossible is to waste one's life.' They think and act in the wrong direction. Especially, their claim that Islam commands so is sheer ignorance and idiocy, for Islam does not command eradication of the human attributes like wrath and lust. Such a claim is a slander against Islam. If Islam had commanded so, Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam), the master of Islam, would not have had these attributes. Whereas, he would say, 'I am a human being, too. Like anybody, I will get angry, too.' From time to time, he would be seen angry. His anger was always for the sake of Allahu ta'ala. Allahu ta'ala praises the people 'who can overcome their wrath' in the Qur'an al-karim. He does not praise those who do not get angry. The wrong-thinker's saying that one should eradicate one's lust is quite groundless. The fact that Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) married nine women (radi- Allahu ta'ala 'anhunna) clearly shows that his statement is wrong. If a person loses his lust, he will have to regain it by taking medicine. So is the case with wrath; a man can protect his wife and children with his attribute of wrath. He fights (jihad) against the enemies of Islam with the aid of this

attribute. It is owing to lust that one has children and is talked of with honor and fame after his death. These are things liked and praised by Islam."

"Islam commands not to eradicate lust and wrath but to control both of them and to use them as prescribed by Islam. It is similar in that it is necessary for a horseman or a hunter not to do away with his horse or dog but to tame it in such a manner as to utilize it. In other words, lust and wrath are like the dog of a hunter and the horse of a horseman. Without these two, the blessings of the next world cannot be hunted. But utilizing them requires training them and using them suitably with Islam. If they are not trained but become excessive and overflow Islam's limits, they will lead one to ruination. Riyada is intended not to eradicate these two attributes but to train them and make them obey Islam. And this is possible for everybody."

"As for the fourth group of wrong-thinkers, they deceive themselves saying, 'Everything was predestined in the eternal past. Before a child is born, it is determined if it is going to be Said (one who deserves Paradise) or shaqi (one who deserves Hell). This will not change afterwards. For this reason, it is no good to worship.' So said the as-Sahabat al-kiram when Rasulullah (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) stated that qada' and qadar would not change and that everything had been predestined in eternity: 'Let us rely on the eternal predestination and not perform 'ibadat.' But Rasulullah replied, 'Do worship! It is easy for everybody to do what was predestined for him in eternity!' That is, he who was determined to be Said in eternity will be made to do what the Said do. From this, it is understood that the fact that those who were determined to be Said in eternity perform 'ibadat and those who were determined to be shaqi disobey Him is similar to the fact that those who were predestined to live healthfully in eternity take food and medicine and those who were predestined to become sick and die do not take food or medicine. Those whose destiny is to die of hunger or sickness are unable to benefit from food or medicine. The ways of earning are open for a person whose predestination is to become rich. A person whose destiny is to die in the east finds the ways leading to the west closed. As reported, when [Archangel] 'Azrail ('alaihi 's-salam) visited [the Prophet] Sulaiman ('alaihi 's-salam), he looked intently at one of those who were sitting there. The man was frightened by the angel's stern looks. When 'Azrail ('alaihi 's-salam) was gone, he begged Sulaiman ('alaihi 's-salam) to command the wind to take him to a western country so that he would escape 'Azrail ('alaihi 's-salam). When 'Azrail ('alaihi 's-salam) came back, Sulaiman ('alaihi 's-salam) asked why he had looked intently on the man's face. 'Azrail ('alaihi 's-salam) said, 'I had been commanded to take away his soul in a western town in an hour. But when I saw him in your company, I could not help looking at him with astonishment. Later I went to the west to carry out the command and saw him there and took his life.'(64) As it is seen, the man feared 'Azrail ('alaihi 's-salam) so that the eternal predestination would take place, and Sulaiman ('alaihi 's-salam) complied; the predestination in eternity was effected through a chain of means. Likewise, a person who was determined to be Said in eternity will get the lot of having iman and correcting his bad habits by undergoing riyada. The 125th ayat of the surat al-Anam declares, 'Allahu ta'ala places Islam into the heart of a servant of His whom He wishes to guide to the right path.' A person who was shaqi in eternity, that is, who was predestined to go to Hell, is given the thought, 'There is no need to perform 'ibadat. It was predestined in eternity whether a person would be Said or shaqi.' He does not perform 'ibadat because of this thought. His not performing 'ibadat because of this thought shows that he was determined to be shaqi in eternity. Likewise, the one whose ignorance was predestined in eternity is given the thought, 'Everything was predestined in eternity. Reading or learning will be of no benefit to a person if he was predestined to be ignorant.' Thus he does not study or learn anything. He remains ignorant. If it was predestined for a person to farm and get

crops abundantly, he is given the lot of ploughing his field and sowing seeds. So is the case with those who were preordained as Said in eternity to have iman and to worship and those who were preordained as shaqi to disbelieve and disobey. Idiots, unable to understand this, say, 'What do iman and 'ibadat have to do with being Said in eternity, or disbelief and disobedience with being shaqi?' With their short reason, they try to comprehend this relation and to solve everything with their own intellect. But the human reason is limited, and it is stupidity or idiocy to attempt to understand the things beyond reason's comprehension with reason. Those who think so should be judged to be stupid. 'Isa ('alaihi s-salam) said, 'It was not difficult for me to make the congenital blind see, nor even to resuscitate the dead. But I could not explain the truth to any idiot.' Allahu ta'ala, with His Infinite Knowledge and Wisdom (Hikma), promotes some of His servants to the grade equal to that of angels, even to a higher grade than that. And some others He demotes to the grade of dogs or swines."

Hadrat Sharaf ad-din Ahmad ibn Yahya Muniri wrote in his 76 th letter: "'Saada' means 'deserving Paradise.' and 'shaqawa' means 'deserving Hell.' Saada and shaqawa are like Allahu ta'ala's two warehouses. The key to the first warehouse is obedience and 'ibada. The key to the second warehouse is sinfulness. Allahu ta'ala destined in eternity whether a person would be Said or shaqi. [We call it destiny.] A person who was called Said in eternity is given the key to saada in this world, and he obeys Allahu ta'ala. And a person who was shaqi in eternity is given the key to shaqawa in this world, and he always commit sins. In this world, everyone can understand whether he is Said or shaqi by looking at the key in his hand. The religious scholars who think of the next world understand from this whether a person is shaqi or Said. But a man of religious post who is addicted to this world does not know it. Every honor or blessing is in obeying and worshipping Allahu ta'ala. And every evil or trouble originates from sinning. Trouble and misfortune come to everybody through sinning. And comfort and ease come through obedience. (65) There was a man who had spent his life praying and performing 'ibadat for many years in the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem; when he neglected one sajda (prostration), he lost so much that he was utterly destroyed. However, because the Ashab al-kahf's dog, walked for a few steps behind the Siddiqs, it was promoted so high that it was not demoted back though it was dirty. This fact is very astonishing; men of knowledge have not solved this riddle for centuries. The human reason cannot comprehend the Divine Wisdom hidden in it. Allahu ta'ala told Adam ('alaihi s-salam) not to eat wheat, but He let him eat it; He commanded Satan to prostrate in front of Adam ('alaihi's- salam), but He willed him not to prostrate; He said we should look for Him, but He did not will that attainment: [on these matters] the pilgrims on the Divine Way said nothing but that they were never able to understand. Then, how can we say anything? He does not need the belief or worships of human beings, whose disbelief or sinning never harms Him. He never needs His creatures. He made knowledge a means for clearing away disbelief and created ignorance as a means for sinning. Belief and obedience originate from knowledge, while disbelief and sin from ignorance. Obedience should not be forsaken even if it may seem very menial! And sinning should be avoided even if it may seem quite venial! The 'ulama' of Islam declared that three things would cause three other things: obedience causes Allahu ta'ala's Rida' (Consent); sinning causes His Wrath (Ghadab); iman causes one to earn honor and dignity. For this reason, we should strictly avoid committing even a venial sin; Allahu ta'ala's Wrath might be in that sin. We should regard every believer as better than we are. He may be a servant whom Allahu ta'ala loves very much. Each person's destiny, which was determined in eternity, can never be changed. If Allahu ta'ala wishes, He may forgive a person who always sins and does not observe His orders. When angels asked, 'Oh Allah! Are You going to create those creatures who

will corrupt the world and shed blood?' He did not say that they would not corrupt but He said, 'I know what you do not know.' He meant, 'I make the unworthy worthy. I make those who are far off come near. I make the low exalted. You judge them by their conduct, but I look at their hearts. You take your sinlessness into account; they trust themselves to My Mercy. As I like your impeccability, so I like to forgive their sins. You cannot know what I know. I make them attain My eternal blessings and fondle them all with My everlasting favor.' "

Sharafuddin Ahmad bin Yahya Muniri (rahmatullahi ta'ala 'alaih) passed away in 732 [1380 A.D.]. He lived in the city of Bihar, India. His grave is there, too. Munir is one of the names of the villages in the region of the city of Bihar. His biography is written in details in the book Akhbar-ul akhyar, by Shah Abdulhaq Dahlawi (rahmatullahi ta'ala 'alaih). This book is in Persian, and it was printed in the city of Diobend, India, in 1332 [1914 A.D.], and later in Lahor, Pakistan. Those books, Irshad-us-salikin, Ma'din-ul-ma'ani, and Maktubat are very estimable. Gulam Ali Abdullah-i Dahlawi (rahmatullahi ta'ala alaih) (66), one of the great Ahl as-Sunnat scholars recommends reading Ahmad bin Yahya Muniri's book Maktubat and reports in his 99th letter that it is very effectual in purifying the heart.

FOOTNOTES

(63) There are 100 letters in this letters collection (Maktubat). It was compiled in 741 A.H. (1339) and printed in India in 1329 (1911). There is a manuscript copy in the Sulaimaniyya Library in Istanbul. Irshad as-salikin and Ma'din al-ma'ani are his two other valuable works. Ghulam 'Ali 'Abdullah ad-Dahlawi (rahimah-Allahu ta'ala), a great scholar of Ahl as-Sunnat who died in 1240 A.H. (1824), recommended, in his 99th letter, Ahmad ibn Yahya Muniri's Maktubat and wrote that it was very helpful in purifying the nafs. Sharaf ad-din Ahmad ibn Yahya Muniri (rahimah-Allahu ta'ala) lived in Bihar, India, where his grave is. Munir is a village in Bihar. His detailed biography is written in Shah 'Abd al-Haqq ad-Dahlawi's (rahimah-Allahu ta'ala) Persian work Akhbar al-akhyar, which was published in Deoband, India, in 1332 (1914) and was later reproduced in Lahore, Pakistan.

(64) This story is told in detail in Mathnawi by Jalal ad-din Rumi, who passed away in Konya in 672 A.H. (1273).

(65) This is Allahu ta'ala's Divine Law. No one can change this. We should not consider something that seems easy and sweet to our nafs as saada. Nor should we think of those things that look difficult and bitter to the nafs as shaqawa or perdition.

(66) Abdullah-i Dahlawi passed away in Delhi in 1240 A.H. (1824).

ALLAH EXISTS AND IS ONE.

ALL CREATURES WERE NONEXISTENT AND THEY WILL BECOME NONEXISTENT

We recognize the things around us through our sense- organs. Things that affect our sense-organs are called beings or creatures. Beings' effects on our five senses are called properties or attributes, by which, they are distinguished from one another. Light, sound, water, air and glass material are all beings; they all exist. Beings that have size, weight and volume, in other words, that occupy a place in space are called substances or matter. Substances are distinguished from one another by their properties or qualities. Air, water, stone and glass are each a substance. Light and sound are not substances because they neither occupy space nor have weight. Every being carries energy or power, that is, it can do work. Every substance can be in three states: solid, liquid and gas. Solid substances have shapes. Liquid and gaseous substances take the shape of the container they are in, and they do not have specific shapes. A substance having a shape is called an object. Substances are always objects. For instance, key, pin, tongs, shovel and nail are different objects having different shapes. But they all may be made of the same matter, i.e. iron. Substances are of two kinds: elements and compounds.

Changes always take place in every object. For instance, it may move and change its place or become bigger or smaller. Its color may change. It may become sick or die if it is a living being. These changes are called events. No change occurs in matter unless there is an exterior effect. An event that does not make any change in the essence of matter is called a physical event. Tearing a piece of paper is a physical event. Some power must affect a substance so that a physical event may happen to that substance. Events that change the composition or essence of substances are called chemical events. When a piece of paper burns and turns into ashes, a chemical event takes place. A substance has to be affected by another substance so that a chemical event may happen in that substance. When two or more substances interact and a chemical event takes place in each, it is called a chemical reaction.

Chemical reaction between substances, that is, their affecting one another, occurs between their tiniest units (which can take part in a chemical change) called atoms. Every object is made of a mass of atoms. Though the structures of atoms are alike, their sizes and weights are different. Therefore, we know of a hundred and five kinds of atoms today. Even the biggest atom is so tiny that it cannot be seen through the most powerful microscope. When similar atoms come together they form an element. Since there are a hundred and five kinds of atoms, there are a hundred and five elements. Iron, sulphur, mercury, oxygen and carbon are each an element. When different atoms come together they form a compound. There are hundreds of thousands of compounds. Water, alcohol, salt and lime are compounds. Compounds form by the compacting of two or more elements or atoms.

All objects, e.g. mountains, seas, all kinds of plants and animals are composed of the hundred and five elements. The building stones of all living and lifeless substances are the hundred and five elements. All substances are formed by the combination of the atoms of one or more of these hundred and five elements. Air, soil, water, heat, light, electricity and germs dissociate the compounds or cause substances to combine with one another. No change happens without a cause. In these changes, atoms, the units of elements, migrate from one substance to another or leave one substance and become free. We see objects disappear but, because we judge by their outlook, we are mistaken, for this outward "disappearing" or "appearing" is nothing but a

transformation into other substances; the disappearing of an object, for example, that of a corpse in the grave, is a change into new substances such as water, gases and earthen substances. If the new substances that come into being through a change do not affect our sense-organs, we cannot realize that they come into being. For this reason, we say that the former object disappeared, though it only underwent a change. We see also that the nature of each of the hundred and five elements changes and that there happen physical and chemical events in each element. When an element combines with another (or others) in a compound, it ionizes, that is, its atoms lose or gain electron(s), and thus the element's various physical and chemical properties change. The atom of each element is made up of a nucleus and varying number of small particles called electrons. The nucleus is at the center of the atom. The nuclei of atoms of all elements except hydrogen are made up of particles called protons, which are charged with positive electricity, and neutrons, which carry no electric charge. The electron is the negative-electric-laden particle which moves round the nucleus. The electrons do not revolve in their orbits every moment, but they change their orbits.

It is evidenced in the radioactive elements that there are changes called fissions taking place in the nuclei of atoms, too. Further, in these nuclear fissions one element turns into another; and some mass of matter ceases to exist and turns into energy, and this change has even been formulated by the Jewish physicist Einstein (d. 1375 A.H. (1955)). So, like compounds, elements change and may turn from one into another.

Every substance, living or lifeless, changes, that is, the old one disappears and a new one comes into being. Every living being, plant or animal that exists today used to be nonexistent, and there were other living beings. And in the future, none of the present living beings will remain, and some other living beings will come into existence. So is the case with all lifeless beings. All living and lifeless beings, for example, the element iron and the compounds stone and bone, and all particles always change, that is, the old ones disappear, and others come into being. When the peculiarities of the substance that comes into being and those of the substance that disappears are a like, man, being unable to notice this change, supposes that the substance is always existent. An example of this is seen in a movie, where a different picture comes in front of the eye at certain short intervals, yet, being unable to notice this, the watchers suppose that the same picture moves on the screen. When a piece of paper burns and becomes ashes, we say that the paper disappeared and ashes came into being, because we notice this change. When ice melts, we say that ice disappeared and water came into being.

It is written at the beginning of the book *Sharh al-Aqa'id*, "Because all beings signify Allahu ta'ala existence, all creatures are called the 'alam. Also, each class of beings of the same kind is called an 'alam, for example, the 'alam of human beings, the 'alam of angles, the 'alam of animals, the 'alam of the lifeless. Or each object is called an 'alam." It is written on the 441 st page of the book *Sharh al-Mawaqif*, (67) "The 'alam is hadith, i.e. everything is a creature. In other words, it came into being later while it had been nonexistent. [And we have explained above that creatures always come into being from one another.] Both matter and peculiarities of substances are hadith. On this subject, there have been four different beliefs: 1) According to Muslims, Jews, Christians and fire worshippers (Magians), both matter and peculiarities of substances are hadith. 2) According to Aristotle and the philosophers following him, both matter and peculiarities of substances are eternal. They said that they had not come into being out of nothing and that they always existed. Modern chemistry positively proves that this statement is wrong. A person who believes or says so goes out of Islam and becomes a disbeliever. Also, Ibn Sina (68) (Avicenna) and Muhammad Farabi [d. Damascus, 339 A.H. (950)] said so. 3)

According to the philosophers preceding Aristotle, matter is eternal but the peculiarities are hadith. Today most scientists have this wrong belief. 4) No one has said that the matter is hadith and that the peculiarities are eternal. Calinos was unable to decide on any of these four types."

Muslims prove in several ways that matter and its peculiarities are hadith. The first way is based on the fact that matter and all its particles are always changing. Something that changes cannot be eternal, but has to be hadith, since the process of each substance's coming into being from the one that precedes it cannot go as far back as to the eternal past. These changes should have a beginning, that is, some initial substances should have been created out of nothing. If there were not an initial substance created out of nothing, that is, if the process of succeeding a substance originating from the substance preceding it went far back to the endless past, there would not be a beginning for substances coming into being from one another, and no substance would exist today. The present existence of substances and their originating from one another shows the fact that they have multiplied from the initial substances which were created from nothing.

Furthermore, a stone that falls from the sky cannot be said to have come from infinitude, infinite space (infinity) or time (eternity), since these words denote 'having no beginning or bound.' Coming from infinitude, then, comes to mean coming from nonexistence, and something which is said to have come from infinitude should have not come at all. It would be ignorant and preposterous to say, "It comes from infinitude." Likewise, men multiplying from one another cannot be coming from eternity. They must have multiplied beginning with the first man who was created out of nothing. If there had not been a first man created out of nothing and men's multiplying from one another had come from eternity, no man would have existed today. The case is the same with every being. It would be ignorant and incompatible with reason and science to say, "So has it come and so will it go. There was no initial substance created out of nothing," on the substances' or beings' originating from one another. Change does not indicate being eternal, but it shows being created out of nothing, that is, it shows not the quality of being *Wajib al-wujud* but being *mumkin al-wujud*.

Question: "The Creator of the 'alam Himself and His Attributes are eternal. Since His Attribute 'Creativeness' is eternal, does not the 'alam have to be eternal, too?"

Answer: We always witness the fact that the Creator, who is eternal, changes substances and particles through various means or causes, that is, He annihilates them and creates others in place of them. The Eternal Creator creates whenever He wills, that is, He always creates substances from one another. As He creates every 'alam, every substance and every particle through some means or causes, so He can create them without any cause or means whenever He wills.

A person who believes that the classes of beings are hadith will also believe that they will be annihilated again. It is obvious that the beings that were created at one time while having been nonexistent can become nonexistent again. We see now that many beings cease to exist or change into a state making them incapable of affecting our sense-organs.

Being Muslim requires believing the fact that substances and objects and all beings were created from nothing, and that they will cease to exist again. We have been seeing that substances have been coming into existence while having been nonexistent and ceasing to exist again; that is, their shapes and properties have been disappearing. When objects cease to exist their substances remain, but, as we have explained above, these substances are not eternal, either; they were created a very long time ago by Allahu ta'ala, and He will annihilate them again when the end of the world comes. Today's scientific knowledge does not deter us from believing this fact. Not to believe it means to denigrate science, and signifies hostility against Islam. Islam does not reject

scientific knowledge. It rejects omission of learning religious knowledge and of the duties of worshipping. Nor does scientific knowledge deny Islam. Moreover, it confirms and verifies it. Because the 'alam is hadith, it must have a creator who created it from nothing, since, as we have explained above, no event can take place by itself. Today, thousands of medicines, household appliances, industrial and commercial goods, electronic equipments, and weaponry are manufactured in factories. Most of them are produced through sophisticated calculations and after hundreds of tests. Do they say that even one of them became existent by themselves? No, they say that these are made consciously and with discretion and all of them requires a maker; yet they claimed that millions of substances related to the living and lifeless and the newly found things and events, the structures of which are still unknown; were self-produced, accidentally. What could this be, if not hypocrisy, strong obstinacy or clear stupidity? It is evident that there is only one Creator who makes the existence of every substance and motion possible. This creator is Wajib al-wujud, that is, He did not come into being after being nonexistent; He must necessarily be eternally existent. He does not need anything for His existence. If He had not necessarily existed eternally, He would have been of mumkin al-wujud, or hadith, a creature as the 'alam is; like a creature, He would have been created out of nothing or, through changes, out of another creature which, too, had to be created by another creator, thus an infinite number of creators being necessary; if we think in the same way as we have explained above that changes in creatures cannot be infinite, it will be understood that there cannot be an infinite number of creators and that creation was begun by a first and only creator. Because, if creators' creating one another one after the other had gone back to eternity, there would have been no creator to begin with, and no creator would have to exist. Therefore, the first non-created creator is the Unique Creator of all creatures. There is no creator before or after Him. The Creator is not created. He always exists. If He ceased to exist for a moment, all creatures would also cease to exist. Wajib al-wujud does not need anything in any respect. He who has created the earth, the heavens, atoms and the living in such a regular and calculated order should be omnipotent, omniscient, able to create at once whatever He wishes, and should be one, but there should be no change in Him. If His power were not infinite, if He were not omniscient, He would not have been able to create creatures in such a regular and calculated order. If there were more than one creator, and when their wishes for creating something would not concur, the one's whose wishes were left undone would not be creators and the things that would have been created would be all mixed up. For further information, please read the Arabic and Turkish commentaries to 'Ali Ushi's [d. 575 A.H. (1180)] Qasidat al-Amali.

No change occurs in the Creator. Before creating the universe He was the same as He is now. As He created everything out of nothing, so He always and still creates everything; otherwise, any change would indicate being a creature and having been created from nothing. We have explained above that He always exists and will never cease to exist. Therefore, no change occurs in Him. As creatures needed Him in their creation initially, so they need Him every moment. He alone creates everything, makes every change. He creates everything through a means so that men can survive and be civilized, so that everything will be in order. As He creates causes, so He creates the power, the effect in causes. Man cannot create anything. Man's work is just to be a medium in causes affecting substances.

To eat when hungry, to take medicine when sick, to strike a match for lighting a candle, to pour some acid on zinc for obtaining hydrogen, to mix lime with clay and to heat the mixture up for making cement, to feed the cow for getting milk, to build a hydro-electric power-station for generating electricity and to construct any kind of factory are all examples of acting as mediums,

using the causes, so that Allahu ta'ala will create new things. Man's will and power, too, are the means created by Him. And men are means for Allahu ta'ala's creating. Allahu ta'ala wants to create in this manner. As it is seen, it would be an ignorant, absurd word incompatible with reason and science to say, "So and so created," or "We created."

Men have to love the unique Creator, who creates them, makes them survive and creates and sends the things they need. They should be His servants and slaves. That is, every creature has to worship and obey and respect Him. This is written at length in the letter on page 7. He Himself declared that the name of this Wajib al-wujud, of this deity, of this god, who is one, is Allah. Men have no right to change His Name which He Himself made known. An act which would be done unjustly would be a very wrong, loathsome deed.

FOOTNOTES

(67) Sayyid Sharif Ali Jurjani, the author of the book Sharh-i mawaqif passed away in Shiraz in 816 [1413 A.D.].

(68) Ibni Sina Husain died in 428 [1037 A.D.].

SALAFIYYA

We will say at the very outset that the books written by the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat (rahmat-Allahi ta'ala 'alaihim ajmain) do not mention anything in the name of "Salafiyya" or a "Salafiyya madhhab." These names, forged later by the la-madhhab, have spread among the Turks through the books of the la-madhhabis translated from Arabic to Turkish by ignorant men of religion. According to them:

"Salafiyya is the name of the madhhab which had been followed by all the Sunnis before the madhhabs of Ashariyya and Maturidiyya were founded. They were the followers of the Sahaba and the Tabiin. The Salafiyya madhhab is the madhhab of the Sahaba, the Tabiin and Taba at-Tabiin. The four great imams belonged to this madhhab. The first book to defend the Salafiyya madhhab was Fiqh al-akbar written by al-Imam al-azam. Al-Imam al-Ghazali wrote in his book Iljam Al-awam 'ani 'l-kalam that the Salafiyya madhhab had seven essentials. The 'ilm al-kalam of the mutakhirin (those who came later) began with al-Imam al-Ghazali. Having studied the madhhabs of the early 'ulama' of kalam and the ideas of Islamic philosophers, al-Imam al-Ghazali made changes in the methods of 'ilm al-kalam. He inserted philosophical subjects into 'ilm al-kalam with a view to refuting them. Ar-Radi and al-Amidi conjoined kalam and philosophy and made them a branch of knowledge. And al-Baidawi made kalam and philosophy inseparable. The 'ilm al-kalam of the mutakhirin prevented the spreading of the Salafiyya madhhab. Ibn Taymiyya and his disciple Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya tried to enrich the Salafiyya madhhab which later broke into two parts; the early Salafis did not go into details about the attributes of Allahu ta'ala or the nass of mutashabih. The later Salafis were interested in detailing about them. This case becomes quite conspicuous with the later Salafis such as Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya. The early and the later Salafis altogether are called Ahl as-Sunnat al-khassa. The men of kalam who belong to Ahl as-Sunnat interpreted some of the nass, but the Salafiyya opposed it. Saying that Allah's face and His coming are unlike people's faces and their coming, the Salafiyya differs from the Mushabbiha."

It is not right to say that the madhhabs of al-Ashari and al-Maturidi were founded later. These two great imams explained the knowledge of itiqad and iman communicated by Salaf as-salihin, arranged it in classes and published it making it comprehensible for youngsters. Al-Imam al-

Ashari was in al-Imam ash-Shafi'i's chain of disciples. And al-Imam al-Maturidi was a great link in al-Imam al-azam Abu Hanifa's chain of disciples. Al-Ashari and al-Maturidi did not go out of their masters' common madhhab; they did not found new madhhabs. These two and their teachers and the imams of the four madhhabs had one common madhhab: the madhhab in belief well-known with the name Ahl as-Sunnat wal-Jamaat. The beliefs of the people of this group are the beliefs of the Sahabat al-kiram, the Tabiin and Tabaa' at-Tabiin. The book, Fiqh al-akbar, written by al-Imam al-azam Abu Hanifa, defends the madhhab of Ahl as-Sunnat. The word 'Salafiyya' does not exist in that book or in al-Imam al-Ghazali's Iljam al-awam 'ani 'l-kalam. These two books and Qawl al-fasl(69), one of the explanations of the book Fiqh al-akbar, teaches the madhhab of Ahl as-Sunnat and answers the heretical groups and philosophers. Al-Imam al-Ghazali wrote in his book Iljam al-awam: "In this book I shall inform that the madhhab of the Salaf is right and correct. I shall explain that those who dissent from this madhhab are the holders of bidat. The madhhab of the Salaf means the madhhab held by the Sahabat al-kiram and the Tabiin. The essentials of this madhhab are seven." As it is seen, the book Iljam writes the seven essentials of the madhhab of the 'Salaf.' To say that they are the essentials of the 'Salafiyya' is to distort the writing of the book and to slander al-Imam al-Ghazali. As in all the books of Ahl as-Sunnat, it is written after the words 'Salaf' and 'Khalaf' in the section on "Witnessing" in the book Durr al-mukhtar, a very valuable book of fiqh: "Salaf is an epithet for the Sahaba and the Tabiin. They are also called the Salaf as-salihin. And those 'ulama' of Ahl as-Sunnat succeeding Salaf as-salihin are called 'Khalaf.'" Al-Imam al-Ghazali, al-Imam ar-Radi and al-Imam al-Baidawi, who was loved and honored above all by the 'ulama' of tafsir, were all in the madhhab of Salaf as-salihin. Groups of bidat that appeared in their time mixed 'ilm al-kalam with philosophy. In fact, they founded their iman on philosophy. The book Al-milal wa 'n-nihal gives detailed information on the beliefs held by those heretical groups. While defending the madhhab of Ahl as-Sunnat against those corrupt groups and rebutting their heretical ideas, these three imams gave extensive answers to their philosophy. Giving these answers does not mean mixing philosophy with the madhhab of Ahl as-Sunnat. On the contrary, they purged the knowledge of kalam from the philosophical thoughts interpolated into it. There is no philosophical thought or philosophical method in al-Baidawi's work, or in the tafsir of Shaikh-zada, the most valuable of its annotations. It is a very nefarious calumny to say that these exalted imams took to philosophy. This stigma was first attached to the 'ulama' of Ahl as-Sunnat by Ibn Taymiyya in his book Al-wasita. Further, to state that Ibn Taymiyya and his disciple Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya tried to enrich the Salafiyya madhhab is to divulge a very important crux where those who are on the right path and those who have deviated into error differ from each other. Before those two people there was not a madhhab called "Salafiyya," nor even the word 'Salafiyya'; how could they be said to have tried to enrich it? Before those two, there was only one right madhhab, the madhhab of Salaf as-salihin, which was named Ahl as-Sunnat wal-Jamaat. Ibn Taymiyya tried to distort this right madhhab and invented many bidats. The source of the books, words and heretical, corrupt thoughts of today's la-madhhabi people and religion reformers is only the bidats invented by Ibn Taymiyya. In order to deceive Muslims and to convince the youth that their heretical path was the right path, these heretics devised a horrible stratagem; they forged the name "Salafiyya" from the term "Salaf as-salihin" so that they might justify Ibn Taymiyya's bidats and corrupt ideas and drift the youth into his wake; they attached the stigmas of philosophy and bidat to Islamic 'ulama', who are the successors of Salaf as-salihin, and blamed them for dissenting from their invented name Salafiyya; they put forward Ibn Taymiyya as a mujtahid, as a hero that resuscitated Salafiyya. Actually, the 'ulama' of Ahl as-

Sunnat (rahmat-Allahi ta'ala 'alaihim ajmain), who are the successors of Salaf as-salihin, defend the teachings of itiqad of Ahl as-Sunnat, which was the madhhab of the Salaf as-salihin, and, in the books which they have written up to our time and which they are still writing today, they inform that Ibn Taymiyya, ash-Shawkani and the like have dissented from the way of Salaf as-salihin and have been drifting Muslims towards perdition and Hell.

Those who read the books *At-tawassuli bi 'n-Nabi wa bi's-salihin*, *Ulama' al-muslimin wal-mukhalifun*, *Shifa' as-siqam* and its preface, *Tathir al-fu'ad min danasi 'l-itiqad*, will realize that the people who invented the corrupt beliefs called "New Salafiyya" are leading Muslims towards perdition and demolishing Islam from within.

Nowadays, some mouths frequently use the name of 'Salafiyya.' Every Muslim should know very well that in Islam there is nothing in the name of the madhhab of Salafiyya but there is only the madhhab of Salaf as-salihin, who were the Muslims of the first two Islamic centuries which were lauded in a hadith ash-Sharif. The 'ulama' of Islam who came in the third and fourth centuries are called Khalaf as-sadiqin. The itiqad of these honorable people is called the madhhab of Ahl as-Sunnat wal-Jamaat. This is the madhhab of iman, tenets of faith. The iman held by the Sahabat al-kiram and by the Tabiin was the same. There was no difference between their beliefs. Today most Muslims on the earth are in the madhhab of Ahl as-Sunnat. All the seventy-two heretical groups of bidat appeared after the second century of Islam. Founders of some of them lived earlier, but it was after the Tabiin that their books were written and that they appeared in groups and defied Ahl as-Sunnat.

Rasulullah (sall-Allahu 'alaihi wa sallam) brought the beliefs of Ahl as-Sunnat. The Sahabat al-kiram derived these teachings of iman from the source. And the Tabiin Izam, in their turn, learned these teachings from the Sahabat al-kiram. And from them their successors learned, thus the teachings of Ahl as-Sunnat reached us by way of transmission and tawatur. These teachings cannot be explored by way of reasoning. Intellect cannot change them and will only help to understand them. That is, intellect is necessary for understanding them, for realizing that they are right and for knowing their value. All the scholars of hadith held the beliefs of Ahl as-Sunnat. The imams of the four madhhabs in deeds, too, were in this madhhab. Also, al-Maturidi and al-Ashari, the two imams of our madhhab in beliefs, were in the madhhab of Ahl as-Sunnat. Both these imams promulgated this madhhab. They always defended this madhhab against heretics and against materialists, who had been stuck in the bogs of ancient Greek philosophy. Though they were contemporaries, they lived at different places and the ways of thinking and behaving of the offenders they had to meet were different, so the methods of defense used and the answers given by these two great scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat were different. But this does not mean that they belonged to different madhhabs. Hundreds of thousands of profoundly learned 'ulama' and awliya' coming after these two exalted imams studied their books and stated in consensus that they both belonged to the madhhab of Ahl as-Sunnat. The scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat took the nass with their outward meanings. That is, they gave the ayats and hadiths their outward meanings, and did not explain away (tawil) the nass or change these meanings unless there was a darura to do so. And they never made any changes with their personal knowledge or opinions. But those who belonged in heretical groups and the la-madhhabis did not hesitate to change the teachings of iman and 'ibadat as they had learned from Greek philosophers and from sham scientists, who were Islam's adversaries.

When the state of the Ottomans, who were Islam's guardians and the Ahl as-Sunnat scholars' servants, dissolved, succumbing to the centuries' contrivances carried on by freemasons, missionaries and the nefarious policy waged by the British Empire, who mobilized all their

material forces, the la-madhabbi took the opportunity. With devilish lies and stratagems, they began to attack Ahl as-Sunnat and demolish Islam from within, especially in those countries, for example in Saudi Arabia, where the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat are not allowed to talk freely. The immeasurable gold dispensed by the Wahhabis helped this aggression spread all over the world. As it is understood from the reports from Pakistan, India and African countries, some men of religion with little religious knowledge and no fear of Allah were given posts and apartment houses in return for their buttressing up these aggressors. Especially, their treachery of deceiving youngsters and estranging them from the madhhab of Ahl as-Sunnat procured them those abominable advantages. In one of the books they wrote in order to mislead the students in the madrasas and Muslims' children, it is written, "I have written this book with a view of eliminating the bigotry of madhhabs and helping everybody to live peacefully in their madhhabs." This man means that the solution to eliminating the bigotry of madhhabs is in attacking Ahl as-Sunnat and belittling the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat. He thrusts a dagger into Islam, and then says he does this so that Muslims will live in peace. At another place in the book, it is written, "If a thinking person hits the point in his thinking, he will be rewarded tenfold. If he misses, he will get one reward." Accordingly, everybody, no matter if he is a Christian or a polytheist, will be rewarded for his every thought; and he will get ten thawabs for his correct thoughts! See how he changes the hadith ash-Sharif of our Prophet (sall- Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam), and how he plays tricks! The hadith ash-Sharif declares: "If a mujtahid hits the point as he extracts rules from an ayat karima or from a hadith ash-Sharif, he will be given ten thawabs. If he is wrong he will be given one thawab." The hadith ash-Sharif shows that these thawabs will be given not to everybody who thinks but to an Islamic scholar who has reached the grade of ijtihad, and that they will be given to him not for his every thought but for his work in extracting rules from the Nass. For, his work is an 'ibada. Like any other 'ibada, it will be given thawab.

In the time of Salaf as-salihin and of the mujtahid 'alims, who were their successors, i.e., until the end of the fourth century of Islam, whenever a new affair came about as a result of changing life standards and conditions, the mujtahid scholars worked day and night and derived how the affair must be done from the four sources called al-adillat ash-Shariyya, and all Muslims did the affair by following the deduction of the imam of their madhhab. And those who did so were given ten thawabs or one. After the fourth century, people went on following these mujtahids' deductions. In the course of all this long time not one Muslim was at a loss or in a dilemma as to how to act. By and by no scholars or Muftis had even been educated for the seventh grade of ijtihad; therefore, today we have to learn from a Muslim who can read and understand the books of the scholars of one of the four madhhabs, and from the books translated by him, and adapt our 'ibadat and daily life to them. Allahu ta'ala declared the rules of everything in the Qur'an al-karim. His exalted prophet Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam) explained all of them. And the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat, learning them from the Sahabat al-kiram, wrote them in their books. These books exist all over the world now. The usage of any new thing that will come about in any part of the world till Doomsday can be exemplified in one of the teachings in these books. This possibility is a mujiza of the Qur'an al-karim and a karama of Islamic scholars. But it is essentially important to learn by asking a true Sunni Muslim. If you ask a la-madhabbi man of religion, he will mislead you by giving you an answer inconsistent with books of fiqh. We have previously explained how the youth are deceived by those la-madhabbi ignoramuses who have stayed in Arab countries for a few years, learned how to speak Arabic, frittered away their times by leading a life of amusement, pleasures and sinning, and then, getting a sealed paper from a la-madhabbi, from an enemy of Ahl as-Sunnat, went back to Pakistan or to India. Youngsters who

see their counterfeit diplomas and hear them speak Arabic think that they are religious scholars. Whereas, they cannot even understand a book of fiqh. And they know nothing of the teachings of fiqh in books. In fact, they do not believe these religious teachings; they call them bigotry. Of old, Islamic scholars looked up the answers to the inquiries made to them in the books of fiqh, and gave the inquirers the answers they found. But the la- madhhabi man of religion, being incapable of reading or understanding a book of fiqh, will mislead the questioner by saying whatever occurs to his ignorant head and defective mind, and will cause him to go to Hell. It is to this effect that our Prophet (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) declared: "The good alim is the best of mankind. The bad alim is the worst of mankind." This hadith ash-Sharif shows that the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat are the best of mankind, and the la-madhhabi are the worst of mankind, because the former guide people to following Rasulullah, viz. to Paradise, and the latter lead them to their heretical thoughts, viz. to Hell.

Ustad Ibn Khalifa Aliwi, a graduate of the Islamic University of Jami' al-Azhar, wrote in his book *Aqidat as-Salafi wal-khalaf*: "As 'Allama Abu Zuhra writes in his book *Tarikh al-madhahibi 'l-Islamiyya*, some people, who dissented from the Hanbali madhhab in the fourth century after Hegira, called themselves Salafiyyin. Abu 'l-Faraj ibn al-Jawzi and other scholars in the Hanbali madhhab, too, by proclaiming that those Salafis were not the followers of Salaf as-salihin but were the owners of bidat, belonging to the group of Mujassima, prevented this fitna from spreading. In the seventh century Ibn Taymiyya waged this fitna again." (70)

The la-madhhabi have adopted the name 'Salafiyya' and say "great imam of Salafis" for Ibn Taymiyya. This word is true in one respect since the term 'Salafi' had not existed before him. There had existed Salaf as-salihin whose madhhab was Ahl as-Sunnat. Ibn Taymiyya's heretical beliefs became the source for the Wahhabis and other la-madhhabi people. Ibn Taymiyya had been trained in the Hanbali madhhab, that is, he had been Sunni. But, as he increased his knowledge and reached the grade of fatwa, he took to self-sufficiency and began to assume superiority to the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat. The increase in his knowledge brought about his heresy. He was no longer in the Hanbali madhhab, because being in one of the four madhhabs requires having the beliefs of Ahl as-Sunnat. A person who does not have the beliefs of Ahl as-Sunnat cannot be said to be in the Hanbali madhhab.

The la-madhhabi take every opportunity to vilify the Sunni men of religious duty in their own country. They have recourse to all kinds of stratagem to impede their books from being read and the teachings of Ahl as-Sunnat from being learned. For example, a la-madhhabi person, mentioning a true scholar's name said, "What's a pharmacist's or a chemist's business in religious knowledge? He must work in his own branch and not meddle with our business." What an ignorant and idiotic assertion! He thinks that a scientist will not have religious knowledge. He is unaware of the fact that the Muslim scientists observe the Divine Creation every moment, realize the Creator's Perfect Attributes that are exhibited in the book of Creation, and, seeing the creatures' incapability compared to Allahu ta'ala's Infinite Power, continuously perceive that Allahu ta'ala is not like anything and is far from all defects. Max Planck, a famous German nuclear physicist, expressed this very well in his work *Der Strom*. But this la-madhhabi ignoramus, relying on the document which he got from a heretic like himself and on the chair provided by him, and perhaps enraptured with the fancy of the gold supplied from abroad, presumes that religious knowledge is in his own monopoly. May Allahu ta'ala upgrade this wretched person and all of us. May he also protect the innocent youngsters from the traps of these certified thieves of religion. Amin.

In fact, the said scholar served his nation humbly for more than thirty years in the field of pharmacy and chemical engineering. But at the same time, getting religious education and working day and night for seven years, he was honored with the 'ijaza given by a great Islamic scholar. Crushed under the grandeur of scientific and religious knowledge, he fully saw his incapability. In this realization he tried to be a servant in its due sense. The greatest of his fears and worries was to presume, by falling for the charms of his diplomas and 'ijaza, that he is an authority on these subjects. The greatness of his fear was conspicuous in all his books. He did not have the courage to write his own ideas or opinions in any of his books. He always tried to offer his young brothers the valuable writings of the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat that were admired by those who understand them by translating them from Arabic or Persian. His fear being great, he had not thought of writing books for many years. When he saw the hadith ash-Sharif, the first page of Sawaiq-ul Muhriqa, "When fitna becomes widespread, he who knows the truth must inform others. Should he not do so, may he be accursed by Allah and by all people!" he began to ponder. On the one hand, as he learned the superiority of the Ahl as-Sunnat scholars' understanding and mental capacity in religious knowledge and in the scientific knowledge of their time and their perseverance in 'ibadat and taqwa, he saw his humbleness: with the ocean of knowledge that those great scholars had, he deemed his own knowledge just a drop. On the other hand, seeing that fewer and fewer pious people could read and understand the books written by the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat and that the ignorant heretics had mixed themselves with men of religious duty and had written corrupt and heretical books, he felt grieved; the threat of damnation declared in the hadith ash-Sharif dismayed him. Also the mercy and compassion he felt for his dear young brothers, compelling him to serve them, he began to translate and publish his selections from the books of the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat. Alongside the innumerable letters of congratulation and appreciation that he had received, now and then he came across criticism and vilification on the part of the la-madhabbi. Because he had no doubt about his ikhlas and trueness to his Rabb and to his conscience, trusting himself to Allahu ta'ala and making tawassul to the blessed soul of His Messenger (sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam) and those of His devoted servants, he went on with his service. May Allahu ta'ala keep all of us on the True Path He is pleased with! Amin.

The great Hanafi scholar Muhammad Bahit al-Muti'i, a professor at Jami' al-Azhar University in Egypt, wrote in his book Tathir al-fu'ad min danisi'l-itiqad:

"Of all people, prophets ('alaihimu 's-salatu wa 's-salam) had the most exalted and maturest souls. They were immune from such things as being wrong, erring, unawareness, perfidy, bigotry, obstinacy, following the nafs, grudge and hatred.

Prophets communicated and explained the things intimated to them by Allahu ta'ala. The teachings of Islam, commands and prohibitions communicated by them, are all true. Not one of them is wrong or corrupt. After prophets, the highest and maturest people were their sahabas since they were trained, matured and purified in the sohbat of prophets. They always said and explained what they heard from prophets. All the things they conveyed are true and they are far from the above-mentioned vices. They did not contradict one another out of bigotry or obstinacy, nor did they follow their nafs. The as-Sahabat al-kiram's explaining the ayats and hadiths and employing ijtihaad for communicating Allahu ta'ala's religion to His servants is His great blessing upon his umma and His compassion for His beloved prophet, Muhammad ('alaihi 's-salam). The Qur'an al-karim declares that the Sahabat al-kiram were stern towards disbelievers but tender and endearing with one another, that they performed salat diligently, and that they expected

everything and Paradise from Allahu ta'ala. All their ijthahds, on which ijma' was formed, are right. All of them were given thawab since the reality is only one.

"The highest people after the Sahabat al-kiram are those Muslims who saw them and were trained in their sohbat. They are called the Tabiin. They acquired their religious knowledge from the Sahabat al-kiram. The highest people next to the Tabiin are those Muslims who saw the Tabiin and were trained in their sohbat. They are called Taba' at-Tabiin. Among the people coming in the centuries after them until Doomsday, the highest and the best ones are those who adapt themselves to them, learn their teachings and follow them. Among the men with a religious authority coming after the Salaf as-salihin, an intelligent and wise person whose words and deeds agree with the teachings of Rasulullah and the Salaf as-salihin, who never diverges from their path in beliefs and deeds, and who does not exceed the limits of Islam, will not fear others' denigrations. He will not succumb to their misguidance. He will not listen to the words of the ignorant. He will use his mind and will not go out of the four madhhabs of the mujtahid imams. Muslims must find such a scholar, ask him and learn what they do not know and should follow his advice in everything they do, because a scholar in this capacity will know and let people know the spiritual medicines which Allahu ta'ala created to protect His servants from erring and to make them always act correctly; that is, he will know the curatives for the soul. He will cure psychopaths and the unintelligent. This scholar will follow Islam in his every word, every action and every belief. His understanding will always be correct. He will answer every question correctly. Allahu ta'ala will like his every action. Allahu ta'ala will give guidance to those who seek the ways to His consent. Allahu ta'ala will protect those who have iman and who fulfill the requirements of iman, against oppression and trouble. He will make them attain nur, happiness and salvation. In everything they do they will be in ease and comfort. On the Day of Resurrection, they will be with prophets, Siddiqs, martyrs and salih (devoted) Muslims.

"No matter in what century, if a man with a religious position does not follow the declarations of the Prophet and his Sahaba, if his words, deeds and beliefs do not agree with their teachings, if he follows his own thoughts and exceeds the limits of Islam, if he oversteps the four madhhabs in those sciences which he could not understand, he will be judged to be a corrupt man with religious positions. Allahu ta'ala has sealed off his heart. His eyes cannot see the right path. His ears cannot hear the right word. There will be great torture for him in the hereafter. Allahu ta'ala does not like him. People of this sort are prophets' enemies. They think that they are on the right path. They like their own behavior. Whereas, they are of Satan's followers. Very few of them come to their senses and resume the right path. Everything they say seems kind, delightful or useful, but all of what they think and like are evil. They deceive idiots and lead to heresy and perdition. Their words look bright and spotless like snow, but, exposed to the sun of truth, they melt away. These evil men with religious positions, whose hearts have been blackened and sealed off by Allahu ta'ala, are called ahl al-bidat or la-madhhabi men with religious positions. They are the people whose beliefs and deeds are not compatible with the Qur'an al-karim, with the hadith ash-Sharif or with the ijma' al-Umma. Having diverged from the right path themselves, they mislead Muslims into perdition, too. Those who follow them will go to Hell. There were many such heretics in the time of Salaf as-salihin and among the men of religious authority that came after them. Their existence among Muslims is like gangrene [or cancer] in one of the parts of the body. Unless the disease is done away with, the healthy parts cannot escape the disaster. They are like people affected with a contagious disease. Those who have contact with them suffer harm. We must keep away from them so that we should not be harmed by them."

Of the corrupt, heretical men of religious position, Ibn Taymiyya has been the most harmful. In his books, particularly in *Al-wasita*, he disagreed with the *ijma' al-Muslimin*, contradicted the clear declarations in the *Qur'an al-karim* and *Hadith ash-Sharif*, and did not follow the path of *Salaf as-salihin*. Following his defective mind and corrupt thoughts, he deviated into heresy. He had much knowledge. Allahu ta'ala made his knowledge the cause of his heresy and perdition. He followed the desires of his *nafs*. He tried to spread his wrong and heretical ideas in the name of truth.

The great scholar Ibn Hajar al-Makki (rahmat-Allahi ta'ala 'alaih) wrote in his book *Fatawa al-hadithiyya*:

"Allahu ta'ala made Ibn Taymiyya lapse into heresy and perdition. He made him blind and deaf. Many scholars informed that his deeds were corrupt and his words were false, and they proved it with documents. Those who read the books of the great Islamic scholars Abu Hasan as-Subki, his son Taj ad-din as-Subki and Imam al-'Izz ibn Jamaat, and those who study the statements said and written in response to him by the Shafii, Maliki and Hanafi 'ulama' living in his time, will see well that we are right.

"Ibn Taymiyya slandered and cast nefarious aspersions upon the scholars of *tasawwuf*. Furthermore, he did not hesitate to attack Hadrat 'Umar and Hadrat 'Ali, who were the archstones of Islam. His words overflowed the measure and rules of decorum, and he threw arrows even at steep cliffs. He stigmatized the scholars of the right path as holders of *bidat*, heretics and ignoramuses.

"He said, 'Corrupt ideas of Greek philosophers disagreeable with Islam were placed in the books of the great men of *tasawwuf*,' and strove to prove it with his wrong, heretical thoughts. Young men who do not know the truth may be misled by his ardent, deceitful words. For example, he said:

'Men of *tasawwuf* say that they see the *Lawh al-mahfuz* (71). Some philosophers, such as Ibn Sina, call it *an-nafs al-falakiyya*. They say that when man's soul reaches perfection, the soul unites with *an-nafs al-falakiyya* or *al-'aql al-fa'al* while awake or asleep, and when a person's soul unites with these two, which cause everything to happen in the world, he becomes informed of the things existing in them. These were not said by Greek philosophers. They were said by Ibn Sina and the like, who came later. Also, Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, Muhyiddin ibn al-'Arabi and the Andalusian philosopher Qutb ad-din Muhammad ibn Sa'bin said statements of this sort. These are the statements of philosophers. Such things do not exist in Islam. With these words they diverged from the right path. They became *mulhids* like those *mulhids* called the Shia, *Ismailiyya*, *Qaramitis* and *Batinis*. They left the right path followed by the scholars of *Ahl as-Sunnat* and of the *hadith* and by those *Sunni* men of *tasawwuf* like Fudail ibn 'Iyad. While diving into philosophy on the one hand, they struggled against such groups as the *Mutazila* and *Kuramiyya* on the other hand. There are three groups of men of *tasawwuf*: the first group are adherent to the *Hadith* and the *Sunnat*. The second group are the heretics like the *Kuramiyya*. The third group are the followers of the books of *Ikhwan as-safa* and the words of Abu 'l-Hayyan. Ibn al-'Agwbi and Ibn Sa'bin and the like adopted philosophers' statements and made them statements of men of *tasawwuf*. Ibn Sina's book *Akhir al-isharat 'ala maqami 'l-arifin* contains many such statements. Also, al-Imam al-Ghazali said such things in some of his books, such as *Al-kitab al-madnun* and *Mishkat al-anwar*. In fact, his friend, Abu Bakr ibn al-'Arabi, tried to save him from it by saying that he had taken to philosophy, but he could not. On the other hand, al-Imam al-Ghazali said that philosophers were disbelievers. Towards the end of his life he read [the *Sahih* of] al-Bukhari. Some said that this made him give up the ideas he had

written. Some others said that those statements were ascribed to al-Imam al-Ghazali to defame him. There are various reports about al-Imam al-Ghazali in this respect. Muhammad Mazari, a Maliki scholar educated in Sicily, Turtushi, an Andalusian scholar, Ibn al-Jawi, Ibn 'Uqail and others said many things.'

"The assertions quoted above from Ibn Taymiyya show his ill thoughts about the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat clearly. He cast such aspersions upon even the greatest ones of the Sahabat al-kiram. He stigmatized most of the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat as heretics. Meanwhile, as he heavily denigrated the great wali and the qutb al-'arifin Hadrat Abu 'l-Hasan ash-Shadhili on account of his books Hizb al-kabir and Hizb al-bakhr and cast squalid aspersions upon the great men of tasawwuf such as Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi, 'Umar ibn al-Farid, Ibn Sab'in and Hallaj Husain ibn Mansur, the scholars in his time, declared unanimously that he was a sinner and a heretic. In fact, there were those who issued fatwa stating that he was a disbeliever.(72)

A letter written to Ibn Taymiyya in 705 A.H. (1305) reads: 'Oh my Muslim brother, who considers himself a great scholar and the imam of this time! I loved you for Allah's sake. I disapproved the scholars who were against you. But hearing your words, unbecoming to love, has puzzled me. Does a wise person doubt that the night begins when the sun sets? You said that you were on the right path and that you were doing al-amru bi 'l-maruf wa 'n-nahyi 'ani 'l-munkar. Allahu ta'ala knows what your purposes and intentions are. But one's ikhlas is understood from his deeds. Your deeds have torn off the cover from your words. Deceived by those who follow their nafs and whose words are unreliable, you have not only defamed those living in your time but also stigmatized the diseased as disbelievers. Dissatisfied with attacking the successors of Salaf as-salihin, you have slandered the Sahabat al-kiram, especially the greatest ones. Can't you imagine in what a situation you will be when those great people ask for their rights on the Day of Resurrection? On the minbar of Jami' al-jabal in the Salahiyya city, you said that Hadrat 'Umar (radi- Allahu ta'ala 'anh) had some wrong statements and disasters. What were the disasters? Which of such disasters were reported to you by Salaf as-salihin? You say that Hadrat 'Ali (radi-Allahu ta'ala 'anh) had more than three hundred errors. If it had been true for Hadrat 'Ali, would you have one right word then? Now I am beginning to act against you. I shall try to protect Muslims against your villainy, because, you have overflowed the measure. Your torture has reached all the living and the dead. believers must shun your evil.'

"Taj ad-din as-Subki listed the matters on which Ibn Taymiyya disagreed with Salaf as-salihin as in the following:

- 1 - He said, 'Talaq (divorce as prescribed by Islam) does not become actual; [in case it happens,] it is necessary to pay kaffara (equal to that which is paid) for an oath.' None of the Islamic scholars that came before him had said that kaffara might be paid.
- 2 - He said, 'Talaq given to a haid (menstruating) woman does not become actual, nor does the talaq given to her during the time of her purity become actual.'
- 3 - He said, 'It is not necessary to make qada for a salat omitted deliberately.'
- 4 - He said, 'It is mubah (permissible) for a haid woman to perform tawaf of the Kaba. [If she does] she will not have to pay kaffara.'
- 5 - He said, 'One talaq given in the name of three talaqs is still one talaq.' Whereas, before saying so, he repeatedly said for many years that ijma' al-Muslimin was not so.
- 6 - He said, 'Taxes incompatible with Islam are halal for those who demand them.'
- 7 - 'When taxes are collected from tradesmen, they stand for zakat even if they do not intend [for zakat],' he said.
- 8 - He said, 'Water does not become najs when a mouse or the like dies in it.'

9 - He said, 'It is permissible for a person who is junub to perform supererogatory salat without making a ghusl at night.'

10 - He said, 'Conditions stipulated by the waqif (person who devotes property to a pious foundation) are not taken into consideration.'

11 - He said, 'A person who disagrees with ijma' al-umma does not become a disbeliever or a sinner.'

12 - He said, 'Allahu ta'ala is mahall-i hawadith and is made up of particles coming together.'

13 - He said, 'The Qur'an al-karim was created in the Dhat (essence, person) of Allahu ta'ala.'

14 - He said, 'The 'alam, that is, all creatures are eternal with their kinds.'

15 - He said, 'Allahu ta'ala has to create good things.'

16 - He said, 'Allahu ta'ala has a body and directions; He changes His place'.

17 - He said, 'Hell is not eternal; it will go out at last.'

18 - He denied the fact that prophets are impeccable.

19 - He said, 'Rasulullah [sall-Allahu ta'ala 'alaihi wa sallam] is no different from other people. It is not permissible to pray through his intercession.'

20 - He said, 'It is sinful to go to Medina with the intention of visiting Rasulullah.'

21 - He also said, 'It is haram to go there to ask for shafa'a (intercession).'

22 - He said, 'The books Tawra and al-Injil did not change in vocabulary. They changed in meaning.'

"Some scholars said that most of the above-quoted statements did not belong to Ibn Taymiyya, but there

has been none who denied his saying that Allahu ta'ala had directions and that He was made of particles coming together. However, it was declared by consensus that he was rich in 'ilm, in jalala and in diyana. A person who has fiqh, knowledge, justice and reason must first observe a matter and then decide about it with prudence. Especially, judging Muslim's disbelief or apostasy or heresy or that he must be killed requires very minute observations and utter circumspection."

Recently it has become a fashionable to imitate Ibn Taymiyya. They defend his heretical writings and reproduce his books, particularly his Al-wasita. From beginning to end, this book is full with his ideas unconformable to the Qur'an al-karim, the Hadith ash-Sharif and ijma' al-Muslimin. It rouses great fitna and faction among the readers and causes hostility between brothers. The Wahhabis in India and those ignorant men of religion who were caught in their traps in other Muslim countries have made Ibn Taymiyya a banner for themselves and have given him such names as 'Great Mujtahid' and 'Shaikh al-Islam.' They embrace his heretical thoughts and corrupt writings in the name of faith and iman. For stopping this terrible current, which brings about faction among Muslims and demolishes Islam from within, we must read the valuable books written by the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnat which refute and rebut these heretics with documents. Among this literature, the Arabic book Shifa as-siqam fi ziyar ti khayri 'l-anam written by the great imam and the profoundly learned scholar Taqi ad-din as-Subki (rahmat-Allahu ta'ala 'alahi) destroys Ibn Taymiyya's heretical ideas, eliminates his faction and exposes his obstinacy. It prevents the spreading of his evil intentions and wrong beliefs.

FOOTNOTES

(69) The books Fikh al-akbar, Iljam and Qawl al-fasl have been reproduced by Hakikat Kitabevi in Istanbul.

(70) In this book of 340 pages, several bidat' of the Salafis and the Wahhabis, their slanders about Ahl as-Sunnat and the replies to them are written in detail. It was printed in Damascus in 1398 A.H. (1978).

(71) For detailed information about Lawh al-mahfuz, see chapter 36 in Endless Bliss, III.

(72) The profound Islamic scholar 'Abd al-Ghani an-Nabulusi wrote the names of these superiors of tasawwuf on the 363 rd and 373 rd pages of his book Al-Hadiqat an-nadiyya and added that they were awliya' and that those who would speak ill of them were ignorant and unaware.
